



FIRDAUSI SILSILAH DURING THE SULTANATE PERIOD

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A B S T R A C T

Although a number of mystic orders flourished in India the most important among them were the Chishti, the Suhrawardi, the Qadiri, the Naqshbandi, the Firdausi and Shattari orders.

The present work is devoted to the exclusive study of the origin, development and contribution of the Firdausi order.

The Firdausi order virtually a branch of Suhrawardi Silsilah was introduced in India by Shaikh Bad'uddin Samarqandi (d.1315 A.D.) but it reached its zenith under Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al-Maneri, who made his centre of activity at Bihar-Sharif. Thus, being a pioneer Saint of this order, he like other important Saints of India, such as, Shaikh Mo'inu'ddin Chishti, Shaikh Masud Ganj-i-Shakar, Shaikh Bahau'ddin Zakariyya, Shaikh Jalal-u'ddin Tabrizi, Shaikh Nizamu'ddin Auliya, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi exerted tremendous influence on the Medieval Indian Society.

He gave a new shape to Sufiism by interpreting mystic terms and adopting a middle path.

But in order to grasp and understand the Firdausi mystic discipline, ideology and institutions it is necessary to carefully and critically study the Origin and development of mystic movement in Islam.

This is why the first Chapter of the present thesis deals with the origin and development of tasawwuf in Islam. The early sources reveal that Sufiism had originated as a Shi'a

spiritual movement in the eighth century A.D. centered round Kufa but later culminated in an amalgamation of different ideologies, including some Shi'ite tenets, Sunni Principles and some Christian, Buddhist and Vedantic elements. Saints like Rabi'a Basri, Maruf-al-Karkhi, Zun Nun Misri, Abu Yazid Bistami evolved mystic terms and Sufis like Mansur-al-Hallaj and Ibn-al-Arabi introduced the controversial doctrines like hulul and Wahdat-ul-Wujud.

The basic principles and the discipline of mystic path were expounded and discussed by Sufis like Sufiyan-al-Thawri, Abu Abdur Rahman Abdullah B. al Mubarak, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali Bin al Hussain al Hakim al Tirmizi, Abu Nasr Abdullah B. Ali B. Muhammad B. Yahya al Serraj, Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi, Shaikh Ali Hujweri, Imam al Qushayri and Imam al Ghazzali. In spite of sincere attempts, Sufism continued to be criticised by the orthodox Ulama.

Finally, in the twelfth century A.D. there emerged a number of mystic orders with several institutions and practices like, Khanqah organization, bai'at or allegiance to the spiritual leader of a specific order and Urs (death anniversary) etc.

The second chapter deals with the Origin and development of the Firdausi order and its expansion in India, and is devoted to the study of the life and activities of the Firdausi Saints. The first three Firdausi Saints like Shaikh Badruddin Samarqandi, Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi and Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi made their centre of activity at Delhi.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri appointed Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi as his successor and with this the Balkhi family established their supremacy over Bihar-Sharif Khanqah. Other Saints like Qazi Shamsuddin, Shah Shdaib, Maulana Amun established their Khanqahs respectively in Chausa, Sheikhpura and Ibrahimpur Charwayan.

In the beginning of the 16th century A.D. conflict arose between the care takers of the mausoleum of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri and Shaikh Hafiz Balkhi, the then Sajjadanashin of Khanqah of Bihar-Sharif. Consequently, one of the remote descendants of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri named Shah Beekh was installed as Sajjadanashin at Bihar-Sharif, whereas, the Balkhi established themselves at Maner, Fatuha, Islampur respectively.

The third and final chapter deals with the Firdausi ideology, institutions and its impact on different groups of the Society.

This chapter is subdivided into three sections. The first section deals with the Firdausi ideology and teachings mainly based on the maktubat and malfuzat of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al Maneri. His views on mystic terms like Shari'at, Tariqat, Haqiqat, Marifat, tauhid, prayer, Fast, Almsgiving etc. have been analysed and briefly described and critically examined.

The Khanqah life and its maintenance by the Shaikh has been discussed in the second section.

The study of this aspect reveals that initially the Shaikh did not want to build and live in a Khanqah. It was at the instance of Muhammad bin Tughluq that his Governor of Bihar constructed a Khanqah at Bihar-Sharif, where the Shaikh on the request of his disciples and admirers established himself in the Khanqah and became the Sajjadanashin.

Thus, within a short period Bihar-Sharif became the chief centre of the Firdausi Saints and the Khanqah became not only a centre of training for the novices but also an asylum for the needy, the poor, mendicants and wayfarers.

The Shaikh, therefore, freely accepted Jagirs, gifts and presents from the rulers, nobles and his disciples.

Relation with and impact on different groups of the society has been discussed in the third section. The Shaikh established cordial relation with the two great Tughluq rulers Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351) A.D.) and Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388 A.D.). His letters to those rulers and some of the nobles are very significant, in which he has exhorted them to render justice, help the destitute, develop love and affection for God and His creatures. Moreover, he has emphatically warned the rulers not to follow the footsteps of the tyrant rulers like, Pharaoh, Shaddad and Namrud etc.

The Shaikh, although had cordial relation with the rulers, he never hesitated in criticising the oppressive nature of the rulers. Like the Suhrawardi Saints he wrote letters to the rulers and nobles recommending the cases of the oppressed

in order to redress their grievances. He even paid visits to the royal court, welcomed the rulers in his Khanqah, in order to establish and maintain cordial relation with them. He firmly believed that the service of humanity is the basic duty of the people specially the rulers.

Infact, the Shaikh himself was very keen to help the poor and the needy and in this respect he did not make any discrimination on the basis of religion, caste and creed. In a number of his letters he has emphasized this aspect of his discipline. It was this spirit. of the Shaikh and his liberal attitude towards the Hindus which made him very popular throughout in Bihar.

So people from different parts of India and from abroad visited the Khanqah of the Shaikh and sought his blessings. This is why the Firdausi Khanqahs continued to inspire and serve the people for several centuries and the Khanqah of the Shaikh at Bihar Sharif is still a living force in the spiritual life of the people of Bihar.

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INTRODUCTION

Different Sufi orders like, the Chishti, the Suhrawardi, the Qadiri, the Naqshbandi and the Shattari have played very important role in the evolution of the Indo-Muslim culture in India, specially during the Medieval period.

Saints like, Shaikh Mu'nuddin Chishti, Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar, Shaikh Baha'uddin Zakariyya, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, Shaikh Jalal-uddin Tabrizi, Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya-al-Maneri, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi have exerted tremendous influence on the Medieval Indian society. Their contribution to the consolidation of Muslim society and cultural heritage of India in general can not be denied. It is, therefore, necessary to study and critically assess the role and contribution of these spiritual orders (silsilahs).

The present thesis is an attempt to study the life and teachings, ideology and institutions of the Firdausi silsilah during the Sultanate period in Bihar.

Sufism or Islamic mysticism is one of the most controversial themes of Islamic ideology. Its exact origin is shrouded in mystery but when it emerged in its developed form it continued to be severely criticised by the orthodox Ulama but, on the other hand, ^{many} a orthodox scholar and a large section of the Sunni saints continued to uphold its tenets. It is this aspect, along with its development till the 12th century A.D. which has been discussed in the first chapter.

The second chapter deals with the Origin and Development of Firdausi order and its expansion in India. It contains a detailed study of the life and activities of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya-al-Maneri and brief life sketches of the Saints of this order.

The third and the final chapter deals with the Firdausi ideology, institutions and their impact on different groups of the society.

The present study is mainly based on the contemporary persian sources including the letters and malfuzat of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya-al-Maneri and his disciples.

Following are some of the major sources.

The Maktubat, a number of letters of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri addressed to his disciples, nobles and rulers, were compiled under different titles by his disciples, for instance Maktubat-i-Sadi, Compiled by Shaikh's disciple, Zain Badr 'Arabi in 747 A.H./ 1346 A.D.; Maktubat-i-Do-Sadi, a collection of 153 letters, compiled by Zain Badr Arabi and Maktubat-i-Bist-o-Hasht (collection of 28 letters) addressed mainly to his favourite disciple Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi.

These letters contain detailed information about the mystic ideology and discipline of the Shaikh, and throw light on his relations with the rulers and different groups of the society.

Another important source is the Malfuz literature which is a collection of the table-talks and discourses of the Shaikh.

The Malfuzat of the Shaikh have also been compiled by his disciples under different titles, for instance:

Madan-ul-Ma'ani, compiled by Zain Badr 'Arabi.

Khwan-i-pur Ni'amat, by Zain Badr 'Arabi.

Bahr-ul-Ma'ani (also known as Tohfa-i-Ghaibi, Fawa'id-ul-Ghaibi and Kanz-ul-Ma'ani) by Zain Badr 'Arabi.

Maghz-ul-Ma'ani by Shaikh Shihabuddin Ahmad Siddiqi.

Malfuz-us-Safar by Zain Badr 'Arabi

Ganj-i-La Yafna and Rahat-ul-Qulub both by Zain Badr 'Arabi.

Fawa'id-ul-Muridin by Muhammad Atiqullah.

Mukh-ul-Ma'ani and Monis-ul-Muridin by Saiyid Shihabuddin Hafif and Salah Mukhlis Daud Khani respectively. Sharh-i-Adab-ul-Muridin was compiled by Ashraf bin Rukn.

Collection of letters of his disciples. Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Collection of 181 letters, compiled by Shaikh Husain Muiz Balkhi.

Maktubat-i-Shaikh Husain Muiz Balkhi (154 letters) by his son Shaikh Hasan Daim Jashan Balkhi.

Malfuzat of his disciples:

Tahqiqat ul Ma'ani or Malfuz Mubarak, Malfuzat of Maulana Shah Amun compiled by his son Shaikh Arzani in 784 A.H.

Ganj-i-La Yakhfa, Malfuzat of Shaikh Husain Muiz Balkhi by Maulana Niamatullah; Monis ul Qulub, Malfuzat of Shaikh Ahmad Langar Darya, by Qazi Saiyid bin Khitab Bihari; Manaqib ul Asfiya by Shah Shoaib.

Besides all these Maktubat and Malfuzat of the Firdausi Saints several other Persian sources, hagiological works and political chronicles contain references to the life and activities of the Firdausi Saints, for instance:

Gulzar-i-Abrar by Muhammad Ghauthi Shattari.

Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi.

Akhbar-ul-Asfiya by Abdus Samad.

Gauharistan by Shah Aziz ullah Hasan Banarsi Kubrawi.

Kalimat us Sadiqin by Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamdani.

Mir'at-ul Asrar by Abdur Rahman bin Abdul Rasul Chishti.

Khazinat-ul-Asfiya by Mufti Muhammad Ghulam Sarwar.

Nafhat-ul-Uns by Maulana Jami.

Sivar-ul-Arifin by Maulana Fazlullah or Darwesh Jamali.

Khair-ul-Majalis of Maulana Hamid Qalandar.

Haft Iqlim by Amin bin Ahmad Razi

Lataif-i-Ashrafi of Maulana Nizamuddin Yamani.

Rafiq-ul-Arifin by Pir Imamu'ddin.

Fawaid-i-Rukniyya by Imamu'ddin Shattari

Ain-i-Akbari Abul Fazl.

Akbar Nama, Abul Fazl.

P R E F A C E

The role of the mystic orders in the evolution of composite culture particularly during the Medieval period has been admitted and appreciated on all hands. Although, several mystic orders like, the Chishti, the Suhrawardi, the Naqshbandi, the Qadiri, the Shattari and the Firdausi flourished in India, Their approach and aim was almost similar.

The present thesis is an humble attempt towards assessing the role and contribution of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al-Maneri, the chief saint of the Firdausi order and his spiritual descendants in Bihar till the advent of the Mughals. The study is mainly based on the original sources, particularly the letters and malfuzat of the Saints of this order.

An attempt also has been made to trace the origin and development of tasawwuf in order to examine the ideology and institutions of the Firdausi order in correct historical perspective.

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

AIOCP & T	: All India Oriental Conference, Proceedings and Transaction.
ASAB	: A Statistical Account of Bengal.
ASBJ	: Asiatic Society of Bengal, The Journal of the.
ASIR	: Archaeological Survey of India, Report.
BPP	: Bengal Past and Present .
BDG	: Bihar District Gazetteer.
BODG	: Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer.
EIAPS	: Epigraphia Indica, Arabic Persian Supplement.
II	: Indo Iranica.
IQ.	: Indian Qarterly.
IBORS	: The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
JPHS	: Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society.
JKBOPL	: The Journal of the Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library.
KBOPL	: Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library.
LAMB	: List of Ancient Monuments of Bengal.
Maa.	: Ma'arif.
MAL	: Maulana Azad Library.
PIHRC.	: Proceedings of the Indian Historical Record Commission.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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CHAPTER-I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF TASAWWUF (MYSTICISM) IN ISLAM

The Firdausi order is one of the most important mystic orders which flourished particularly in Bihar during the 14th and 15th centuries A.D. This silsilah was introduced in India by Shaikh Badruddin Samarqandi (d.1315 A.D.) but was popularized by Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya al Maneri. Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Shaikh Hussain Muiz Nosha Tauhid Balkhi, Maulana Amun, Shah Sho'ib, Zain Badr 'Arabi, Qazi Shamsuddin etc., are the chief disciples of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al Maneri and famous saints of this order.

The chief centre of activities of this order was Bihar-Sharif. A number of Khanqahs were also established by the Firdausi Saints in Maner, Shaikh Pura (Monghyr Distt.), Chausa, Patuha, Islampur etc.

In order to understand and assess the ideology, institutions and activities of the saints of this order, it is necessary to trace the origin and development of Sufism.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD 'SUFİ'

Much has been said about the etymology of the word 'Sufi!'

The more plausible suggestion made by most of the writers¹ is that this word is derived from 'Suf' (meaning 'wool'), on the ground that the earlier saints used to put on woollen garments.

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1. For instance, Abu Nasr Abdullah B. Ali B. Muhammad B. Yahya al-Serraj al-Tasi, (Kitab al luma fi'al tasawwuf, Ed. R.A. Nicholson, London, 1914 P.21); Shaikh Abul Qasim Abd al Karim B. Hawazin B. Abdul Mulk B. Talha B. Muhammad al Nishapuri al Qushayri, (Al Risalah al Qushayriya, Egypt, 1300 A.H., p.16); Ibn Khaldun. The Mugaddimah, (An introduction to the history. Eng. tran. by Franz Rosenthal, New York, 1958, Vol.3, pp.76-77).

This derivation is further confirmed by the authority of Oriental tradition. "Noldeke has cited a number of passages showing that," in the first two centuries of Islam, garments of coarse wool were worn by the common people and especially by those who followed an ascetic way of life. The words Labisa'l-suf (he clad himself in wool), occur frequently in the early literature and signify that the person to whom they were applied had renounced the world and become an ascetic; at a later period, when asceticism passed into mysticism, 'Labisa'l-suf' generally meant 'he became a Sufi! In Persian too the ascetic is often called 'Pashmina-push' i.e. 'wearing a woollen garment! See Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Great Britain, 1954, Vol.XII, p.10.

some other writers suggest that this word might have been derived from either of the following words:

1. Safa (صفا) - Purity
2. Saff (صف) - Row of the devotees in prayers
3. Suffa (صلاه) - Estrade or raised floor, reference being made to the Ahl-e-suffa where some of the companions of the Prophet (devoted solely to the service of God having no mundane attachment) resided.
4. Sufah (صوفه) - Name of an ancestor of Banu Muzir, an Arab tribe.
5. Safawat al Qifa (صفوت القنا) - A Lock of hair on the nape of the neck.
6. Sivo Sufiya (ثيو صوفيا) - A Greek word meaning 'mystery of God'!

But none of these suggestions seems to be convincing and etymologically defensible.¹

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1. It has been argued that if the word Sufi is derived from Safa (purity) then the correct form should have been 'Safawi,' and not 'Sufi.' Similarly, derivation from 'Saff' would be 'Saffi', and from Suffa it would be 'Suffi' and not Sufi. The Greek word Sivo-Sufiya begins with Sin (س) and not Sad (ص), moreover, the early Sufis had not been influenced by the Greek philosophy. For a detailed discussion See: Al-Hujweri, Kashf-ul-Mahjub, Eng. tran. R.A. Nicholson, Delhi, 1982, p.31;
Encyclopaedia of Islam, London, 1934, Vol. IV, p.681;
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.10;
Dr. Mir Valiuddin, Qura'nic Sufism, Delhi, 1979, p.1-2;
Patric Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, Delhi, 1982, p.608.

If it is accepted that the word 'Sufi' is derived from 'suf' it merely denoted that it was applied to certain individuals who used to put on woollen garments. Hence the question arises in what respect were they distinct from the rest of the Muslims and what was their ideology?

In order to investigate this aspect of the problem it is necessary to trace the name and analyse the ideology of that particular person, who first came to be known as 'Sufi'.

THE FIRST SUFI:-

ABU HASHIM KUFİ (d.767 A.D.)¹

It is generally said that there was a distinct group of Saints or hermits who used to wear woollen garments,² but such persons have not yet been identified nor their ideology has been analysed.

In this connection two names have been suggested, one of Abu Hashim Kufi and the other of Jabir Bin Hayyan (d.813 A.D.),³ both have been claimed to be the earliest known Sufis.

According to Jami, the first Muslim saint, known as 'Sufi', was Abu Hashim of Kufa, a contemporary of Sufiyan Thawri (d.777A.D.)⁴

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1. Maulana Abdur Rahman Bin Ahmad Jami, Nafhat-ul-Uns, Tehran, 1337 A.H.; p.31.
 2. As has been asserted by Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi who observes that the term 'Sufi' is basically applied only to those saints who clad woollen garments. See Sk. Shihabuddin Suhrawardi, Awarif ul Ma'arif, Urdu tr. by Hafiz Saiyid Rashid Ahmad Arshad, Lahore, 1982, p.101.
 3. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam (Urdu Daera-i-Ma'rif-i-Islamiya) Lahore, 1971, Vol. VII, p.4.
 4. Nafhat-ul-Uns, p.32.

No early and authentic account of Abu Hashim Kufi is available, except of few incidents about and some sayings attributed to him recorded by Jami which indicate that he strongly condemned hypocrisy (riya)¹, vanity (kibr) and the knowledge which does not benefit.² It is also reported that some Christian noble had constructed a Khangah (monastery) for him at Ramla.³

If the anecdotes attributed to Abu Hashim Kufi are correct then it simply means that Abu Hashim might have been some pious Muslim who condemned the moral vices like hypocrisy and pride and criticised those scholars who made knowledge the means of worldly gains. But it is not clear whether he came to be known as a 'Sufi' for wearing woollen garment.

From this scanty information available about him, it is very difficult to bring out even the rudiments of Tasawwuf (mysticism) at this stage.

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1. Sufiyan Thawri is reported to have admitted that "he could not have understood the meaning of hypocrisy had he not met Abu Hashim Kufi." Jami has quoted a couplet of Abu Hashim Kufi. (ابو هاشم! گفتن بسوزن کوه کندن آسانترست از بیرون کردن کبر و منی از دلها)
"It is easier to dig a mountain with a needle than to eradicate pride and vanity from one's heart." See Nafhat-ul-Uns, p.32.
 2. This he is reported to have remarked when he saw a Qazi coming out from the house of the Abbasid Wazir, Yahya B. Khalid Barmakide, (d.805 A.D.), apparently meaning that it is dangerous for a Qazi to develop intimacy with an officer. Nafhat-ul-Uns, p.32.
 3. Nafhat-ul-Uns. pp.31-32.

JABIR B. HAYYAN: (d.813 A.D.)¹

But another 'Sufi' who also flourished during the same period and has explained and expounded the tenets and features of Tasawwuf in its early stage was Jabir B. Hayyan who, as claimed by some scholars, was the first ascetic to be known as 'Sufi.'

He was the celebrated Shi'a alchemist of Kufa, contemporary of first Abbasids. His father was a certain Azdi, called Hayyan, a druggist of Kufa. He has left several works which throw light on his mystic ideology.

He was most probably the first alchemist who introduced Muslim gnosis into his system of science. But his gnosis is not the primitive gnosis which developed in Shi'a's circle of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. as described by some writers on heresy; it is rather the gnostic syncretism which was in vogue among the Shi'a extremists (ghulat) at the end of the 9th century A.D. which, combining with revolutionary political tendencies, threatened the very existence of Islam. Jabir proclaimed the imminent advent of a new imam who would abolish the law of Islam and replace the revelation of the Qur'an by the lights of Greek science and philosophy.

From the point of view of his religious terminology, Jabir is closely connected with Qarmatianism. The imam is called patiq in contrast to Samit; the degrees of initiation are called by

1. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, 1981, Vol.VII, pp.4-9.

the same terms as among the Qarmatians and Fatimid Ismailis. Contrary to the Qarmatians and the Ismailiyya, 'Ali is not regarded as one of the seven imams. He is a Samit, a concealed divinity, superior to the patiq and the seven imams are his terrestrial incarnations. With the Nusayris he shares the conceptions of the three divine hypostases: 'Ayn (=Ali), Mim (Muhammad), Sin (=Salman); the Sin being superior to the Mim. According to him the imam is a direct emanation from the 'Ayn', after having passed the stages of the Mim and the Sin. As with all the Shia ghulat and particularly with the Nusayris, the doctrine of metempsychosis is accepted by him.

Jabir says that his knowledge was handed down to him by his master Ja'far al Sadiq. In the religious hierarchy he ranks himself immediately after the Imam. He further quotes as his master a certain Harbi the Himyari, a monk (rahib) and a man named Udhri al-Himar. Among the contemporaries of Jabir are mentioned the Barmakids, Khalid, Yahya and Jafar, to whom Jabir dedicated several of his treaties.¹

These Shia Sufis organized themselves in a group which continued to flourish in Kufa till at least first quarter of the 9th century A.D., when its last prominent Sufi, Abdak al-Sufi, a vegetarian and legitimist, died in Baghdad in 825 A.D.²

1. Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.), 1965, Vol.II, pp.357-59.

2. Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. IV, p.681.

Thus, it becomes clear that Sufiism in its earliest form had emerged as a Shi'a spiritual movement, which remained confined to Kufa. But two centuries later the term 'Sufi' came to be applied to all the Muslim saints of Kufa, Basra and elsewhere.¹ This is confirmed by two significant observations made by Imam al Qushayri (d.1072 A.D.) and Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi (d. 1234 A.D.).

Imam al Qushayri, however, is of the view that during the life time of the Prophet and after his death the Companions were known with the title of (Suhaba) Companions, which was the fittest and highest title awarded to them. Lateron, the followers of the Companions were known as Tabi'in (followers of the Companions of the Prophet), and their followers came to be known as "Taba-Tabi'in" (the followers of the followers), while those who remained intensively attached to devotion and abstinence from wordly life were known as Abid and Zahid respectively. But when heresis and different groups emerged, says the author, and each of them claimed to have abstinents and devouts, therefore, the pious among the Sunnis came to be known as 'Sufis'. They had already become known with this title before the second century Hijra.²

1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol.IV, p.681.

2. Risalah al Qushayriya, p.9.

But, Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi observes that the men of Nearness to God (Ahl-e-Qurb), through out the Islamic countries from East to West ^{were} not known as 'Sufis'. This term was strictly applied only to (Saints) who used to put on a particular (Khas) type of garment (i.e. woollen garment). Several Godly men (Mugarrabun), points out the Shaikh, were present in the countries of West Turkistan and Transoxania but were not known as 'Sufis' (in the strict sense of the word) because they did not use the woollen dress. Therefore, according to the Shaikh, there is no controversy in this technical term 'Sufi' which is applied (in a wider sense) to those who achieved nearness to God, (Qurb)¹.

What the Shaikh seems to conclude is that many a pious and upright person (Ahl-e-qurb) should not be excluded from the category of Sufis simply because they do not use woollen garments. He, therefore, includes such pious persons among the Sufis.

Thus, the cult known as Sufism which originated in Kufa, as a Shia spiritual movement in 2nd Century A.D. passed through various stages and culminated in 13th Century.

During this period it produced numerous Sufis, some of them expounded, discussed and explained the basic tenets of Sufism.

1. Awarif ul Ma'arif, (Urdu trans.) pp.104-5.

Some of the important Sufis of the early period are:

Abu Zarr al Ghifari	(d. 652 A.D.)
Huzaifa B. Husayl al Yamani	(d. 657 A.D.)
Imran ibn Husain.	
Owais Qarani	(d. 657 A.D.)
Abu Hurayra al Dawsī al Yamani	(d. 677 or 678 A.D.)
Rabi B. Khaitham	(d. 686 A.D.)
Sa'id B. al Musayyib	(d. 713 A.D.)
Amir B. Abdul Qays	(d. 721 A.D.)
Abu Halim Habib B. Salih al Rai	
Hasan al Basri	(d. 728 A.D.)
Habib al 'Ajami	(d. 738 A.D.)
Malik Bin Dinar	(d. 744 A.D.)
Fadl Rakkashi	
Abu Israil Mulai	(d. 757 A.D.)
Ibrahim B. Adham	(d. 777-8 A.D.)
Abu Abdullah Sufiyan al-Thawri	(d. 777-8 A.D.)
Abu Salim Daud Ibn Nasir al Tai	(d. 777 or 782 A.D.)
Abdul Wahid B. Zaid	(d. 793 A.D.)
Rabah b. Amr Qaysi	(d. 796 A.D.)
Salih Murri	
Abdullah B. al Mubarak	(d. 797 A.D.)
Rabia bint Ismail al Adawiya	(d. 801 A.D.)
Abu Ali Fuzayl Ibn Ayyaz al Talqani	(d. 803 A.D.)

Not all of these saints were known as Sufis, but have been included among them by later hagiologists.

What is certain is that during the second and third Century Hijra there were certain individuals who were really ascetic and in this respect they distinguished themselves from the rest of the Muslim society.

The following brief biographical sketches of these saints show some traits of what later come to be known as Sufiism.

ABU ZARR AL GHIFARI: One of the Companions of the Prophet, noted for devotion, simplicity, humility, pauperism, and asceticism, took part in the battle of Ditch in 627 A.D. He is also compared with Ibn Masud for his deep religious learning. During the last part of his life he preferred solitude at Al-Rabadha, where he died in 652 A.D.¹

HUZAIFA B. HUSAYL AL YAMANI: He settled at Basra, and became famous for asceticism and quietism. He used to rejoice whenever informed that his family had nothing to eat, thus he purely and entirely depended upon God (Tawakkul).²

IMRAN IBN HUSAIN: One of the Companions of the Prophet, preferred a life of asceticism.³

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1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) 1960, Vol.I, p.114;
Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam. Lahore, 1980, Vol.II, p.806.
 2. Margaret Smith, Al-Muhasibi, An early Mystic of Baghdad, Amsterdam, 1974, p.64.
 3. Aziz Ahmad, Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment, Oxford, 1964, p.121.

OWAIS QARANI: Contemporary of the Prophet embraced Islam but could not see him. He became legendary due to intensive devotion and abstinence, reported to have abandoned all Worldly luxuries and adopted life of solitude. According to some writers he died on the way to Azarbejan, while others say that he fought on the side of Hazrat Ali and lost his life in the battle of Siffin in 657 A.D.¹

ABU HURAYRA AL DAWSI AL YAMANI: Famous as "father of the Kitten," he was one of the Companions of the Prophet. He was a man of piety, preferred poverty and always depended on the charity of the Prophet.²

SA'ID B. AL MUSAYYIB: He was the son-in-law of Abu Hurayra, one of the seven great jurists of Medina and a man of devout nature. He made a show of hypocrisy, according to the custom of the early Sufis, who sought to incur blame (malama), in order to avoid self-conceit.³

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1. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, 1980, Vol.III, p.570;
T.W.Beale, An oriental Biographical Dictionary, Delhi, 1971, p.71.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.), 1960, Vol.I, p.129.
 3. T.W. Beale, op.cit, p.344;
Margaret Smith, Op.Cit, p.65.

AMIR B. ABD UL QAYS: A famous tabi'i and ascetic of Basra he practised abstinence, discarded wealth and advocated complete dependence upon God (Tawakkul)¹. He preferred the life of celibacy. Ibn Qutayba states on the other hand that his puritanism led to his being suspected of Kharijism. In the eyes of posterity, he is an eloquent man whose sayings have been preserved. While the Sufis include him among the eight principal 'Zuhhad'²

ABU HALIM HABIB B. SALIM AL RAI: A companion of Salman al-Farsi, he was a great devotee of the Prophet of Islam. He adopted the life of shepherd, having no worldly possessions.³

HASAN AL BASRI: His full name is Abu Sa'id B. Abi'l Hasan Yasar al-Basri. He is known for sincerity and uprightness. He fearlessly criticised the rulers of his time, i.e. the Governor of Iraq i.e. Hajjaj ibn Yusuf and incurred his displeasure and had to go into hiding until Hajjaj's death. He refused to take part in and condemned rebellion against tyrant rulers. In connection with the Worldly attitude and attachment to earthly possessions, he warned others saying "men are already on the way to death and those who are already dead are only waiting for the others

1. Margaret Smith, op.cit. p.185.

2. Kashf ul-Mahjub, p.66; Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) Vol.I, p.441.

3. Kashf ul-Mahjub, p.90.

to follow." He was suspicious to those who amassed riches and even refused to accept free cultivated land (mawat). Two of his famous sayings are, "Repolish these hearts (the seats of religious feeling), for they very quickly grow rusty", and "make this World into a bridge over which you cross but on which you do not build." Hence he led a life of piety, ascetic and penury rejecting worldly luxuries.¹

HABIB AL AJMI: He was a pious Muslim and disciple of Hasan al Basri. He preferred the life of penury and destitute.²

MALIK B DINAR: He was the son of Persian slave from Sijistan (Kabul) and a disciple of Hasan al Basri. He was one of those who took asceticism and abstinence from pleasure to the extreme.³

IBRAHIM B. ADHAM B. MANSUR B. YAZID B. JABIR (ABU-ISHAQ)

AL-TAMIMI AL-IJLI: His life of asceticism and abstinence made him a legendary figure. He is reported to have been a prince of Balkh (Khurasan) who abandoned the royal life, repented for his past sins, renunciated the earthly luxuries and mundane pleasures. He refused begging and worked in the cultivated land or orchard for his livelihood. He took part in two land and two -
naval

1. Kashf-ul-Mahjub, PP.36-38;

Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.) Vol.III, p.247;

A.J. Arberry, Sufism, An account of Mystics of Islam, London, 1979, pp.33-4.

2. Hamid ullah Mustawfi, Tarikh-i-Guzida, Ed. by Edward Browne, London, 1913, p.631;

T.W. Beale, Op.Cit. P.127;

A.J. Arberry, Op.Cit. pp.32-8.

3. Kashf-ul-Mahjub, P.89;

A.J. Arberry, Op.cit. PP.26-31;

Margaret Smith, Op.Cit. p.69.

expeditions against the Byzantium.¹

SUFIYAN AL THAWRI: Abu Abdullah Sufiyan b. Sa'id al-Thawri, was born in 715-6 A.D. at Kufa, having good knowledge in Hadith and law (Shari'at), he adopted the life of ascetic. He is reported to have criticised the political situation of Kufa and refused to accept any state services due to extreme fear of God (taqwa) and to save himself from committing sin. He used to say "If the divines (Ulama) are corrupt, who can restore them to soundness? Their corruption consists in their inclination towards worldliness, and if the physician is himself attracted by the sickness, how can he cure another?" Among Sufiyan's sayings on asceticism one of them is that "When a dervish frequents the company of the rich and powerful, you may know that he is a hypocrite, and when he frequents the courts of Kings, you may know that he is a thief". He died during the period of the Khalifa Al Mahdi and buried at Basra, where he is reported to conceal himself in order to avoid accepting the post of Qazi.²

RABAH B. AMR QAISI: He was an ascetic and used to say that in order to attain the righteousness one has to leave his wife

1. Kashf-ul-Mahjub, p.103;

Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.), Vol.III, pp.985-6;

T.W. Beale, Op.Cit. p.171;

H.A.R. Gibb and J.H.Karamers, Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, Netherlands, 1953, P.155.

2. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, 1975, Vol.XI, PP.78-82;
T.W. Beale, Op.Cit. p.389.

in the position of widow and his children as orphans. He took himself to live with dogs. He also expounded the theory of the mystical ideas of the revelation of the glory of God (ta'ali) and of the Divine friendship (Khulla).¹

These brief biographical sketches of the early mystics indicate that they adhered to extreme devotion to God, simplicity, pauperism, asceticism to the suppression of carnal desire (nafs), the life of piety, fear of God (taqwa), trust in God (tawakkul), patience (Sabr), humility and abandonment of mundane luxuries and pleasures. Some of the Saints preferred extreme abstinency and even practised celibacy, which they adopted and developed in order to devote more and more time and energy to God.

TECHNICAL TERMS:

The following Saints introduced certain technical terms into Sufi ideology.

Rabī'a-al-Basri² (d.801 A.D.) and Ma'ruf-al-Karkhi³ (d.815AD)

1. Margaret Smith, Op.Cit. pp.73-74.

2. Rabī'a Bint Ismail al 'Adwiya was the famous lady mystic of Basra, noted for her ascetic life. She was overwhelmed by the consciousness of the nearness to God to the extent that she is treated as the first in Sufism to advocate the concept of love of God (mahabbat). Thus, her boundless love of and devotion to God and her highly intense ecstatic experience made her one of the greatest of all Sufis. She lived a life of hermit and celibacy. See, Margaret Smith, Rabī'a, the Mystic and her Fellow Saint in Islam, Cambridge, 1928.

were first to introduce the doctrine of total forgetfulness and Ishq (passionate love for God) into the Sufi ideology.

Abu Shaiq Ibn Ibrahim-al-Azali Balkhi¹ (d. 791 A.D.) put much emphasis on the concept of Tawakkul (Trust in God)²

Zun Nun Misri³ (d. 859 or 860 A.D.), a celebrated saint of Egypt, introduced the concept of Ma'rifat (Gnosis)

f.n. no.3 continued.

3. Ma'rif Abu Mahfuz Bin Firuz-al-Karkhi or Abu Mahfuz Ma'rif B. Firuz-al-Karkhi was a mystic of Persia. Originally, a Christian he became Muslim at the hands of Imam al Rida, after learning much from him. Within a short span of time he achieved the status of celebrated ascetic. His tomb is located on the West bank of Tigris at Karakh in Baghdad, a place of Pilgrim till now. See: Tarikh-i-Guzida, p.637; Nafhat-ul-Uns, p.27; Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) Vol. III, p.303; T.W. Beale, Op.Cit. p.245; Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p.327.

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1. He was a disciple of Ibrahim B. Adham, a pious saint and was the contemporary of Caliph Harun al Rashid, See, T.W. Beale, Op.Cit. p.378.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.11.
 3. Abu'l Faiz Tuban b. Ibrahim Zun Nun al Misri, "with him," according to Aziz Ahmad, "the inflow of Christian mystical ideas becomes a torrential current, regarded, Divine love as a mystery to be practised by the mystic initiates and to be concealed from the uninitiated mass of people. He established into the Sufi mystical system the concept of spiritual 'stages' and 'stations' (ahwal wa maqamat) through which a mystic passes during his spiritual journey. He also introduced into Sufism magical and theurgical elements of heterodoxy and came to be regarded as a malamat (one deserving reproach)" See, Aziz Ahmad, Op.Cit. P.122.

in Sufiism.¹

Sari Saqati (d.867 or 870 A.D.) introduced the theory of Divine unity of God (Wahdat).²

Abu Yazid of Bistam³ (d. in or about 874 or 877 A.D.)

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1. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, P.77.
 2. K.A. Nizami, Some Aspects of Religion and politics in India during the 13th Century. Aligarh, 1961, p.54.
 3. Abu Yazid or Bayzid Taifur B. Isa B. Surushan al Bistami, "A mystic of heterodox views and of Zoroastrian ancestry, have been explained as of Upanishadic and Vedantic origin, transmitted to him by his teacher Abu Ali Sindi, a mysterious person generally supposed to have come from Sindh (the Valley of Indus), but possibly from 'Sind' a village in Khurasan much nearer home to Bistam." (Aziz Ahmad, Op.Cit, PP.123-4). Moreover, The Encyclopaedia of Islam contains more detailed information which runs as follows, "His passionate aspiration is aimed at absolutely freeing himself through systematic work upon himself, "I was the smith of my own self, 'haddad - nafui', of all obstacles separating him from God (hudjub) with the object of "attaining to Him". He described this process in extremely interesting autobiographical sayings with partly grandiose images. The 'world' (duniya), "flight from the world" "Zuhd" worship of God" (ibadat), miracles (Karamat), dhikr, even the mystical stages (maqamat) are for him no more than so many barriers holding him from God. When he was finally shed his "I" in 'fana' as snakes their skin and reached the desired stages, his changed self-consciousness is expressed in those famous hybrid utterances - (Shatahat), which so scandalized and shocked his contemporaries "Glory be to me! How great is My Majesty"! "The obedience to me is greater than my obedience to Thee" "I am the throne and the foot-stool" : I am the well preserved Tablet" : "I saw the ka'aba walking around me" etc. see Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol.I, PP.162-3.

was the first to employ the word 'fana' (annihilation) in the annals of Sufiism.¹

The concept of Sainthood (Wilayat), was advocated by Abu Abdullah Muhammad B. Hakim al Tirmidhi (d-285/898).² Abu Said Ahmad B. Isa al-Kharraz put emphasis on "Ain ul Jama";³ Ahmad B. Muhammad Abul Hasan al Nuri, (d. 907 A.D.), a contemporary of Junaid al Baghdadi, preferred society (suhbat) to solitude (Uzlat).⁴

The doctrine of hulul (fusion), ittihad (union), rajat (return) and tanasukkh (transmigration) was added by Mansur al Hallaj.⁵

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1. Al Hujweri claims that Abu Said al-Kharraz (d. 899 A.D.) was the first to introduce the concept of 'fana' and 'baga' in Sufiism. See Kashf ul Mahjub, pp. 241-4.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.), 1978 Vol.IV, p.683.
 3. Ibid. p.683.
 4. Kashf ul Mahjub, pp.159-90.
 5. Al-Hallaj (the wool carder) Abul Mughis al Husain B.Mansur B. Muhammad al Baydawi born in about 857-8 A.D. at Tur (to the north east of al-Bayda in Fars). It is said that he was the grandson of a Gabr and descendant of Abu Ayyub one of the companions of the Prophet. He was accused by the Jurisprudents for apostasy and having claimed Divinity (Ana'l Haq), was sent to scaffold by the order of Caliph al Muqtadir in 922 A.D. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.), 1971, Vol.III, pp.99-104.

Ibn al-ʿArabi (1164-1240), bases the structure of Sufi hierarchy on four elements of asceticism (1) silence (al-samt) which is of two kinds, silence of the tongue and of the heart, and which leads to the gnosis of God; (2) solitude (al-uzlah) which ensures the silence of the tongue and leads to the knowledge of the world; (3) hunger (al-juʿ) which leads to the knowledge of the real nature of Satan, (4) wakefulness (al Sahar) which can be of the eye or of the heart and which leads to the knowledge of the soul. He was the author of classical works like Futuhāt e Makkiya and Fusus ul Hikam. He forcefully introduced and systematically expounded the theory of Monism (Wahdat ul Wujūd) which became one of the cardinal yet extremely controversial principles of Sufiism.¹

BOOKS ON MYSTICISM:

It was during the second century Hijra that Sufiism (Tasawwuf) began to develop into a formal science and some of the eminent writers expounded its principles and introduced numerous technical terms. Sufiyan al Thawri (d. 777-8 A.D.) was the first saint to wrote books on mysticism.² For instance, Al Jamia al Kabir fi al fiqh wa al Ikhtilaf; Al Jami al Saqir;

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1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) Vol.III, pp.707-711;
Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p.146.
 2. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, 1975, Vol. XI,
p.80.

Kitab al Faraiz.¹

Abu Abdur Rahman Abdullah B. al Mubarak² of Marw, Persia (d. 797 A.D.) was the first Sufi to write a book on self-denial entitled, Kitab al Zuhd.

Abu Abdullah Harith B. Asad al Anazi (d. 857 A.D.), was popularly known as al Muhasibi (i.e. One who examines his conscience). He was a great theologian, belonged to the Shafii school of law but became ascetic and gave up all theological pursuits in his later part of life. He has produced several mystic works, famous among them being Kitab al Ri'aya' lihuquq Allah Wa'l qiyam biha (Book of observance of what is due to God and Abiding therein; Kitab al Wasaya or Nasaih al Diniyya (Book of Religious precepts or counsels), consisted of 41 Chapters, written in order to give sincere counsel to the faithful and to serve as means of instruction to all novices (murids) and Kitab al Tawahhum wa'l ahwal (Book of supposition and the terrors to come).³

It was Jahiz of Basra (869 A.D.), the first Arabic writer to use the word 'Sufi', in his famous book Kitab al bayan, who

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1. A copy of Kitab al Faraiz is preserved in the Raza Library, Rampur, See: K.A.Nizami, Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht, (Urdu) Delhi, 1980, p.74.
 2. He was born of a Turkish father and Iranian mother, is reported to have built two hospices (Ribat) at Marw, See, S.A.A. Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, Delhi, 1978, Vol. I, p.39.
 3. Margaret Smith, Op.Cit. pp.53-6.

gives a list of some sufis amongst the pietists (al Sufiya mina'l nussak).¹

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali bin al Husain al Hakim al Tirmizi, (d.898 A.D.), an eminent saint produced several works on Sufiism, two of them are Khatam al Awliya (Seal of saints); and Kitab al Nahj (Book of the High Way).²

Abu Said Ahmad B. Isa al Kharraj (d. 899 A.D.), also wrote several books e.g. Adab ul salat, (book on what is fitting in prayer) and Kitab al Sidq (book of sincerity).³

Abu Nasr Abdullah B. Ali B. Muhammad B. Yahya al Serraj⁴ (d.988 A.D.). Wrote his famous book Kitab al Luma fi'l tasawwuf.⁵ It was one of the earliest, principal and reliable books on Sufiism containing the doctrines like, hal, magam, zuhd, sabr, khauf, mahabbat, self-mortification etc.⁶

Abu Talib al Makkī (d.995 A.D.), compiled his monumental work on Sufiism, i.e. Qut-ul-Qulub.⁷

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1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.10.
 2. M.I. Al Geyoush, Islamic Quarterly, Vol.XV, No.1, 1971,P,23.
 3. M. Smith, Reading from a Mystic of Islam, 1950, PP.29-33.
 4. According to the authentic sources, he learned knowledge under the guidance of several teachers, like Jafar al Khuld, Abu Bakr Muhammad B. Dawud al Daqqi, Ahmad B. Muhammed al Salim. He is reported to have travelled extensively to attend conversation of Sufis of Basra, Baghdad, Damascus, Ramla, Antioch, Tyre, Cairo, Bistam, Tustar, Tabriz, Tawqa, etc. see, Nafhat-ul-Ung, p.320; Kashf-ul-Mahjub, p.323.
 5. This book is edited by R.A. Nicholson in 1914.
 6. A.J.Arberry, OP.Cit. PP.67-8; Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht, p.92.
 7. Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, 1980, Vol.XIV/I, pp.127-8.

Shaikh Abu Bakr al Kalabadhi¹ (d. 1000 A.D.) wrote 'Kitab al Ta'arruf li-mazhabi ahl al tasawwuf').

Abu Abdul Rahman al Sulami² (d. 1021 A.D.) wrote his famous and popular book 'Tabqat al Sufiyya'. He is also reported to have collected traditions and sayings of Sufis on 'sama' in his book 'Kitab al sama' (the book of audition).³

Abu Nu'aym al Isfahani⁴ (d. 1038 A.D.) wrote Hilyat al Awliya wa Tabqat al Asfiya on sufiism. In this book, he has critically examined the etymology of the word 'Sufi'. He has also given biographical accounts and sayings of about 649 saints.

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1. Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Ishaq al-Kalabadhi, about whose life and activities no detailed information is available. He is believed to have died in 990 or 994 A.D. and buried in Kalabadh, a district in Bukhara, whose tomb is a place of worship. His famous book 'Kitab al ta'arruf li-mazhabi ahl al-tasawwuf' was translated into English under the title of 'The doctrine of the Sufis' by A.J. Arberry, Cambridge, 1935. see, Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.) Vol.IV, p.467.
 2. He was a native of Nishapur, whose original name was Muhammad bin Husain B. Muhammad Musa al Salmi, disciple of Shaikh Abul Qasim Nasrabadi, see, Nafhat ul Uns. p.199.
 3. Kashf ul Mahjub, pp.108 and 401.
 4. Abu Nu'aym al Isfahani Ahmad B. Abd Allah B. Ishaq B. Musa B.Mihran al Shafi, born in 948 A.D. in Isfahan. In order to gain knowledge he had travelled Iraq, Hajaz and Khurasan and is reported to have spent 14 years there. He was regarded as one of the best authorities in Fiqh, Hadith and Tasawwuf. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol.I, pp.142-3.

Shaikh Al Hujweri¹ (d.1072) wrote his famous book on mysticism, Kashf ul Mahjub² (revelation of hidden). It is the first book written in Persian, which deals with various mystic orders and their ideologies. It has explained and discussed mystic terms like, Faqr, Khirqah, Shari'at, tarikat, haqiqat, hal, maqam, shirk etc.

Shaikh Abul Qasim Abd al Karim B. Hawazin B. Abdul Mulk B. Talha B. Muhammad al Nishapuri al Qushayri³ (d.465/1072)

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1. Abul Hasan Ali b. Uthman b. Ali al Julabi Summa al Ghaznawi al Hujweri, an Iranian mystic, born at Hujwir (a suburb of Ghazna) popular as Ganj-i-Baksh or Data Ganj, buried in a Mausoleum built by Sultan Ibrahim Ghazni a successor of Masud, son of Mahmud Ghazni, outside the Bhatti gate in Lahore. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.), Vol.III, p.546.
 2. Translated into English by R.A. Nicholson; Urdu trans. by Waqar Ali, Deoband, 1985.
 3. Born in 376/986 in Ustuwa (the region of actual Kucan on the Upper Atrak). At Nishapur, he came in contact with Shaikh Abu Ali al Daqqaq, who became his spiritual Master. It was under proper guidance of Shaikh Abu Ali Daqqaq, the young scholar completed mystical exercises. He studied fiqh under the Shafii jurist Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Bakr al Tusi (d.1029 A.D.). Kalam and Usul al Fiqh with Ashari scholar, Abu Bakr b. Furak (d.1027 A.D.) and Abu Ishak al Isfaraini (d.1027 A.D.). See, Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, Lahore, Vol.XIV/I, P.438; Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.), 1979, Vol.V, PP.526; Tarikh-i-Guzida, p.784.

a theologian and a great Mystic, produced a famous work on sufiism 'Risala fi'ilm al-tasawwuf' known as 'al Risalah-al-Qushayriya' (completed in 1045 A.D.). He has critically examined the evolution and meaning of the word 'sufi'. He also deals with the mystic terms like nafs, waqt, ruh, maqam, hal, haybat, uns, tawajid, wajd, wajud, jama wa farg; jama al jama; sirr, fana o бага; ghibat o huzur; mahw o ithbat; sirr o tajalli; makshif o buad; Shari'at, tarikat, haqiqat and marifat etc.

Abu Hamid Muhammad B. Muhammad al Tusi (d.505/1111 A.D.) popularly known as Imam Ghazzali,¹ one of the famous Sufis, erudite scholar had command over the subjects like Fiqh, Science, Philosophy, Logic and Sufiism. It was he who produced a monumental work on Mysticism 'Ihya u'l 'Ulum ud Din' (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) in which he gave a new turn to Islamic Mysticism. He has also sought to prove with authentic evidences and powerful arguments that Sufiism is totally and absolutely Islamic in origin, based on the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. He added

1. He was born in 450 A.H./1058 A.D., at the TUS in Khorasan, near modern Meshhed. After completing rudimentary education at his native town he went to Jurjan to study with Abu Nasr al Ismaili and then went to Nishapur to study under the well known spiritual teacher Imam al Haramayn in the Nizamiyya Academy, where he stayed upto 1085 A.D. He was then appointed as President of the Nizamiyya Academy of Baghdad by Nizamul Mulk Tusi. It was in his old age of retirement he passed his days in solitude and destitute at Damascus and TUS. He spent his time in meditation and spiritual exercises, during this period he devoted his time and energy for Ihya u'l 'ulum u'd Din. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) Vol.II, pp.1038-1040.

2. Ihya u'l 'ulum ud Din, translated into English by Maulana Fazlul Karim, in four volumes, Kitab Bhawan, New Delhi-1982.

the mystic terms like, abad, adam, ahwal, ashiq, azal, bala, baga, basirat, bast, batin, buad, dahshat, zauq, dil, fana, ghaybat, ghayr, ghayrat, hal, haybat, himmat, husn, ibrat, ishq isharat, istiyag, istighna, ithbat, ittisal, jafa, jalal, jamal, jan, khayal, karishma, ma'ani, mahw, malamat, marifat, mashuq, nafs, naz, nazar, niyaz, qabs, qahr, qalb, qurb, ruh, shauq, sirr, sukr, tafrid, tajrid, talab, talwin, tamkin, tawhid, uns, wafa, wahm wajd, waqt, wisal, yaqin, zahir, etc.

CONFLICT BETWEEN EARLY SUFIS AND ORTHODOX ULUMA:

During the period, from the 7th century A.D. to the 13th century A.D. (from Abu Hashim Kufi and Jabir bin Hayyan to Shaikh Muhi ud Din ibn al Arabi (d.1240 A.D.) the Sufi movement passed through various stages and tremendous transformation. During the process it incorporated and assimilated a number of ideas and institutions from Shiaism, Orthodox Islam, Greek philosophy, Christianity, Buddhism and the Vedanta. The followers of the Sufi discipline came from various nations with different backgrounds retaining many a principle of their respective faiths which crept into Sufi ideology.¹ It was the inflow of the heretic

1. I.H. Qureshi has rightly observed that "When a religion spreads over a vast area rich in traditions of culture and philosophy, as Islam did within a short time, it cannot obliterate all traces of previous beliefs. Egypt, Asia Minor, Iran and Central Asia had long histories of civilization when they came into contact with Islam. From the very first day

ideas into the mystic ideology, whether deliberate or unconscious, which brought Sufiism into conflict with the Orthodox Islam.¹

1.fn. continued....

of its entry into these lands, it had to deal with a body of thought which it had to reject, tolerate, or assimilate. Rejection is a conscious process which implies examination and evaluation, but assimilation is not always conscious, it is mostly subconscious and new ideas enter into our convictions without being subjected to criticism. A region with a long history of culture has traditions of thought which create a common pool of ideas; these permeate all religions and philosophies which spread there. Through the processes of subconscious thinking rose heresies of a fundamental nature, because previous concepts took the mind of the thinker into channels which were in reality foreign to the mother philosophy." See;

The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pak Sub-continent (610-1947), Delhi, 1985, p.139.

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1. I.H. Qureshi has pointed out, "In the earlier period, however, the rise of heresies created grave problems for Islam. Apart from the natural inflow, through the conversion of enlightened peoples, of ideas which were, like Greek philosophy, of a beneficial nature of conscious effort was made by two religions to introduce their beliefs into Islam and thus to subvert it. They had perfected a technique of working underground in Iran before the advent of Islam. The Mazdakis and the Manichaeans had been suppressed by Zoroastrianism, and, to save themselves from annihilation, had gone underground. They did not change their methods after the Muslim conquest and continued their underground activities. Through their secret work, there crept into Islam heresies which show the comingling of the ideas of these religions with certain doctrines of Islam. The Isma'ilis learnt the techniques of working underground and subverting the faith of the followers of other sects and religions." See; I.H. Qureshi, Op.Cit, p.140.

Following are some of the doctrines and ideas, severely criticised and condemned or at last not accepted by the orthodox Ulama:

MARIFAT (GNOSIS):- The term marifat means the mystical knowledge of God. It was introduced by Zun Nun¹ of Egypt, who is reported to have used it in the sense that the marifat or higher knowledge achieved by the Sufis is much higher and superior to that of the knowledge (ilm) achieved by the Ulama, thus, asserting the superiority of Sufis over the Ulama.

Inspired by the doctrine, some of the Sufis laid more emphasis on the spirit than the letter and ultimately declared the external rites as obstacles in the way of spiritual ascent of the soul.²

This approach was severely criticised and condemned by the orthodox Ulama.³

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1. It may be noted here that, "Zun Nun was a copt or Nubian by race; described as a philosopher, and alchemist-i.e. a student of Greek wisdom; during his life time he was regarded by many as Zindiq (free thinker)".
See, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.12.
 2. H. Lammens, S.J. Islam Belief's and Institutions, Delhi, 1979, p.124.
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.12.
 3. Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.) Vol.IV, P.683.

FANA (ANNIHILATION): The term fana, literally means annihilation or passing away. Technically it has been used by the Sufis either in the sense of extinction of all passions and desires or the passing away of whole individual-self in union with God.

This doctrine was introduced into mystic ideology by Abu Yazid Bistami (d. 870 A.D.), who is reported to have been deeply influenced by Abu Ali of Sind on the basis of his association with Abu Ali, probably a convert from Hinduism. It has been argued that by Abu Yazid's doctrine of fana and baga, with its pantheistic sense, was derived from Vedanta and the Buddhist nirvana. Such theories were bound to be criticised by the orthodox Ulama.¹

HULUL (INFUSION OF DIVINE INTO HUMAN SOUL): The concept of hulul (infusion of Divine into human soul), whether borrowed from

1. Abu Ali Sindi is reported to have taught Abu Yazid Bistami the doctrine of Divine Unity (tauhid) and ultimate truth (haqaiq), while Abu Yazid instructed him 'in the obligatory duties of Islam.' See, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.12; For details See, also, Aziz Ahmad, Op.Cit. p.124.

Hinduism or Christianity¹ and introduced by Mansur al Hallaj was severely criticised and condemned by the Ulama.²

1. R.A. Nicholson claims that the concept of hulul was taken from Christianity (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XII, p.15). While Aziz Ahmad is of the view that he was influenced by Hinduism and the doctrine of hulul resembles the Hindu doctrine of the illumination of buddhi by Purusha. See. Aziz Ahmad, Op.Cit. p.125.
2. In 902 A.D., al-Hallaj performed his third and last Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca), after returning to Baghdad he set up in his house a model of Kaaba, prayed at night beside tombs and in the day time proclaimed in the streets or the Suqs his burning love of God and his desire, "to die accursed for his community", 'O' Muslims, save me from God', 'God has made my blood lawful to you: Kill me', The Zahiri Muhammad B. Dawud condemned and wanted death penalty for these utterances that al-Hallaj should claim a mystical Union with God. But the Shafi'i Jurist Ibn. Suraydi saved al-Hallaj on the pretext that mystic inspiration was beyond the jurisdiction of the courts.

In the meanwhile, al-Hallaj, while going to reply to al-Shibli, in the mosque of al-Mansur by the famous Shath (theopathic phrase) claimed 'Ana'l Haq,' "I am (God), the Truth."

In 911 A.D., al-Hallaj was arrested at Sus (Hanbali dominated town in Ahwaz) from where he was brought back to Baghdad and kept in prison for nine years. In 921-2 the trial re-opened by Hamid, the Vazir an anti-Hallaj, supported by Ibn Mudjahid, the respected leader of the corporation of the Qur'an readers, although Hanbali tried to save al-Hallaj from punishment on the plea that Vazir did not possess the right to judge the conduct of the 'holy men'. But Maliki Qazi Abu Umar Ibn Yusuf arranged the advance the judgement of the tribunal, (where Shafi'is were absent, Hanafi Qazi declined to give judgement) and obtained eighty four signatories to condemn death sentence to al-Hallaj. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.), 1971, Vol.I, pp.100-2.

WISAL (UNION WITH GOD): The mystic concept of Union with God. (wisal) is another significant term applied by the Sufis in the context that the absolute object of a seeker (Sufi) remains to attain Union with God, which is not a physical condition but a spiritual one. The Sufi begins to have a sense of unity with the Universe, which, in his mind, gets united with God. This central feeling has resulted in the rise of several heresies. This is why, Sunni theologians opposed the concept of Union with God.¹

WAHDAT UL WUJUD² (EXTERNAL MONISM): It is the doctrine of Wahdat ul Wujud (Pantheism or external monism), which has been one of the most controversial theories of Sufiism. It was for the first time formulated by Ibn al-Arabi (d.1240 A.D.),

1. See; I.H. Qureshi, Op.Cit. PP.144-5.

H.Lammens, Op.Cit. p.113.

2. His remark that "one is struck," comments a modern scholar that "every worshipped object as a manifestation of God, 'in spite of its name of a stone or a tree or an animal or a man or an angel is nothing but resemblance to the Hindu polytheism. His symbolization of sexual and profane love as a stage leading towards love divine, and the same philosophical concept underlying the practices of Hindu Krishna and Shakti cults, which derive from such scriptuaral premises as the Upanishadic comparison of the bliss of Brahma with unconscious sleep in the arms of a beloved women."

For detaile see, Aziz Ahmad Op.Cit. p.127.

by which he declared that 'Reality is one and the existence of created things is nothing but the very essence of the existence of the Creator. On the other hand, the phenomenal is the outward manifestation of the real.'¹ "The true faith," according to him, 'is the intuitive faith, that of the heart, which is above contradiction. He visualizes all creation as emanating from God and the mystic Union as evolution in a contrary direction, at the end of which, 'we again became God.' Since God is everywhere, he argues, 'to attach oneself, to a Particular credo, chosen at the expense of all others, is to deprive oneself of a part of the true divine Essence.'²

Irrespective of its source this theory has been subjected to severe criticism by many a Sufi as well as the Ulama and most of the orthodox Ulama have condemned and rejected it outrightly.

FAQR (POVERTY): Literally the word 'fagr' means deprived of property i.e. One having no worldly possessions and in order to meet the daily needs depending on others.

But, according to the Sufis a fagir is not 'One who is poor', but one who is free from the desire of both the Worlds

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1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, (New Ed.) Vol.IV, pp.683-4;
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.15.
 2. H. Lammens, Op.Cit. PP.126-7.

and lives for the sake of God, i.e. One who voluntarily gives away to the poor what comes to him from various sources and keeps nothing for himself, such a person is, therefore, quite distinct and different from one who possess nothing or has received nothing.

This concept of poverty has been severely criticised by the orthodox 'Ulama, like Ibn Taimiyya, who contested the very principle of 'the virtue of poverty,' invoked by the Sufis as an important condition of spiritual perfection. According to him, there is no reference to 'fagr' in the Holy Qur'an in the sense the Sufis use it which is a clear imitation of Christianity.¹

MAHABBAT (DIVINE LOVE): Similarly, the Sufi concept of Divine Love (mahabbat) leading to renunciation of every thing including even the desire for Paradise with the object of achieving God's love could not be accepted by the 'Ulama. And utterances like that of Rabia al Basri that she had no fear of hell or hope of paradise, and that she could not love the Prophet because her love of God absorbed her so entirely that neither love nor hate of any other thing remained in her heart² or the daring utterances of Bistami like, 'Thou obeyest me more than I obey Thee', 'I am still greater,' "Subhani: Praise be to me! How great is My glory," were bound to come into conflict with orthodox Islam.³

1. H. Lammens, Op.Cit. p.123.

2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, pp.11-2.

3. H.Lammens, Op.Cit. p.123.

PIRI - MURIDI

It is generally believed that in order to join mystic path, one has to take oath of allegiance (bai'at) from a spiritual leader (Shaikh or Pir or Murshid), whose authority in that specific order (silsilah) was absolute. The spiritual leader being an eminent saint well versed in the theological knowledge, experienced in spiritual training like, austerities, devotion, 40 days fast (chillah) etc, start imposing various instructions and guidance to the novices gathered round him.

But obedience to the Shaikh or (Pir) was exaggerated by the Sufis like Zun Nun Misri who is reported to have declared that the true disciple should be more obedient to his master² than to God Himself.

And the Naqshbandi practice of tasawwur-i-Shaikh or concentration on the mental image of the Preceptor in the early stages of the initiate's education was regarded as un-Islamic and heretic.³

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1. The concept of Murshid, Shaikh or spiritual leader has been borrowed from Christianity. See, H.Lammens, Op.Cit. p.117.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.XII, p.13.
 3. According to Aziz Ahmad, this practice has been borrowed from Buddhism, see, Aziz Ahmad, Op.Cit. p.126.

ATTEMPT AT RECONCILIATION:

As all the principles of Sufiism were not un-Islamic and all the Sufis were not heretics, therefore, most of the 'Ulama hesitated in declaring Sufiism as a heresy and all the mystics as heretics. But, the moderate Sufis like Abu Nasr Abdullah al-Serraj, Imam al Qushayri and Imam al Ghazzali, realised that some of the principles and practices of the Sufis appeared to be un-Islamic and heretic. They, therefore, tried their level best to reconcile such ideas and practices with orthodox Islam.

Abu Nasr al Serraj in his famous book Kitab al Luma fi'l tasawwuf, and Imam al Qushayri (d. 1072 A.D.) in his 'Risala fi'ilm al tasawwuf', discussed and critically examined the origin and development of Sufiism and tried to prove that Sufiism is deeply rooted in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah.

Imam al Ghazzali (d.1111 A.D.) produced Ihya u'l Ulum - ud Din. (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) one of the most significant and voluminous works on Sufiism. His work was a synthesis of Sufiism with external aspect of Islam. Before him the orthodox ulama were not ready to accept Sufiism as a part of Islam. But through his writing al-Ghazzali proved mysticism as a part and parcel of Islam. The result was that even the learned scholars, who were hostile to mysticism, like Ibn al Jawzi, Ibn Taimiyya and Ibn al-Qayyim admitted the authority of Ghazzali. Thus, the process of reconciliation of Sufiism

with orthodoxy culminated in al-Ghazzali was held in respect both by the Orthodox 'Ulama and the Sufis.

But inspite of Imam al-Ghazzali's sincere attempts Sufiism could not get rid of heretic and non-Islamic elements which had crept into it. Even the orthodox Sufis could not check the inflow of ideas and practices which were regarded as un-Islamic and borrowed from other religions. Consequently, the gulf between Sufiism and orthodox Islam continued to exist, and has not yet been bridged completely.

It was this Sufiism which flowed through various silsilahs (Sufi orders) which emerged in the 12th century A.D. and spread throughout the Islamic world. These mystic orders (silsilahs) were established under the guidance of or associated with the names of some eminent spiritual guide. These groups or orders differed in matter of mystic ideology, style of teaching, mystical exercises and rule of life. When a particular mystic way or mystic Path (tariqa) was handed down through a continuous chain, it came to be known as silsilah or spiritual order.

Along with the development of Sufi orders a number of Institutions¹ associated with the Khangah life also emerged.

1. Bai'at, Khirqah, Khilafat nama, Sama' (audition party), these terms and institutions are discussed in the same chapter.

Shaikh Ali-Hujweri (d. 1072 A.D.) has given a list of twelve mystic orders,¹ namely:

1. HULULIS - Abu Halman of Damascus.
2. HALLAJIS - Hussain B. Mansur al-Hallaj
3. TAIFURIS - Abu Yazid Taifur Bistami.
4. QUSSARIS - Abu Saleh Hamdan B. Ahmad al-Qussar.
5. KHARRAZIS - Abu Sa'id Kharraz.
6. KHUFAIFIS - Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Khafif Shirazi.
7. SAYYARIS - Abul Abbas Sayyari.
8. MUHASIBIS - Abu Abdullah Harith B. Asad al-Muhasibi.
9. TUSTARIS - Sahl. Bin Abdullah of Tustar
10. HAKIMIS - Abu Abdullah Mohd. B. Ali al-Hakim al-Tirmizi
11. NURIS - Abul Hasan Ahmad B. Mohd. Nuri.
12. JUNAIDIS - Abul Qasim al Junaid B. Muhammad of Baghdad.²

1. Abul Fazl has listed fourteen mystic orders, such as:

1. HABIBIA - Habib al Ajami
2. TAIFURIA - Shaikh Bayazid Taifur Bistami.
3. KARKHIA - Khwaja Ma'ruf Karkhi.
4. SAQATIA - Shaikh Abul Hasan Sari Saqati.
5. JUNAIDIA - Shaikh Junaid Baghdadi.
6. GAZRUNIA - Shaikh Abu Ishaq B. Shahryar
7. TUSIA - Shaikh Ala'uddin Tusi
8. FIRDAUSIA - Shaikh Najmu'ddin Kubra.
9. SUHRAWARDIA - Shaikh Najib uddin Abdul Qahir Suhrawardi.
10. ZAIDIA - Abdul Wahid B. Zaid.
11. IYAZIA - Shaikh Fuzail B. Ayyaz
12. ADHAMIA - Shaikh Ibrahim B. Adham.
13. HUBAIRIA - Khwaja Hubairat al-Basri.
14. CHISHTIA - Khwaja Abu Ishaq

See; Ain I Akbari, Ms. Maulana Azad Library, A.M.U.
Vol.II, f. 239, a-b.

2. Kashf ul-Mahjub, pp.176-266.

SOME OF THE IMPORTANT MYSTIC ORDERS

The Chief mystic orders (silsilahs) destined to flourish and play significant role in social, political, religious and spiritual life in India are the Chishti,¹ the Suhrawardi, the Naqshbandi, the Qadiri, the Shattari and Firdausi orders.

CHISHTI ORDER:

This order, founded by Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shami (d.940 A.D.)² was introduced in India by Khwaja Mu'nuddin Sijzi Chishti³ (1141-1236 A.D.), a pioneer saint and disciple of Khwaja Usman Haruni, who made his centre at Ajmer. Khwaja Qutbu'ddin Bakhtiyar Kaki of Awush⁴ (d. 1235 A.D.) and Shaikh Hamidu'ddin Sufi

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1. This order is named after a famous village, Chisht , near Herat (Khurasan) where the founder of this order was born.
 2. For a biographical sketch see, Nafhat ul-Uns, p. 206; Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani or Amir Khurd, Siyar ul Auliya, Delhi, 1885, pp.39-40.
 3. He was born in Sistan. Later lived in various towns in Khurasan and finally came to Baghdad where he met the most famous Sufis of the time, like, Shaikh Najmu'ddin Kubra, Shaikh Shihabu'ddin Suhrawardi and Awhad u'ddin Kirmani. In 1193, he came to Delhi after a short stay he went to Ajmer, where he died in 1236 A.D. See Siyar ul Auliya, pp.45-48.
 4. He was born at Awush in 1186A.D. completed his education under Maulana Abu Hafs Awushi, later he came to Baghdad where he met Khwaja Mu'nuddin Chishti and became his disciple. He established his Khanqah at Delhi where he was deeply loved and revered by the people. For biographical references see, Hamid Bin Fazlullah al Ma'aruf Jamali, Siyar ul Arifin, Roto, No.173, Research Library, Deptt. of History, A.M.U. ff.34-7; Siyar ul Auliya, pp.48-57.

Nagauri¹ (d. 1274 A.D.) are the chief successors of Khwaja Mu'nuddin Chishti. Shaikh Faridu'ddin Masud Ganj-i-Shakar (1175-1267), the Chief Khalifa of Shaikh Bakhtiyar Kaki established his Khanqah at Ajodhan (Pakpatan). This silsilah reached its zenith under Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (1238-1325), the most distinguished Khalifa of Shaikh Faridu'ddin Ganj-i-Shakar.

Thus, within a short span of time the Chishtis established their centres at Ajmer, Narnaul, Nagaur and Mandal in Rajasthan; Hansi and Ajodhan in Punjab and in some towns of modern Uttar Pradesh; Bihar, Bengal, Assam and the Deccan as well.

SUHRAWARDI ORDER:

The Suhrawardi order founded by Shaikh Ziauddin Abu al Najib Abdul Qahir Suhrawardi (1097-1168),² was popularised by Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi³ who worked hard for the consolidation and expansion of the order, his several disciples,

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1. He was a posthumous child of Shaikh Muhammad al-Sufi, who claimed to have been a descendant of Sa'id Bin Zaid, one of the companions of the Prophet of Islam. Shaikh Hamidu'ddin Sufi established his Khanqah at Sawal, a small village in Nagaur (Rajasthan).
 2. For biographical Sketch see; Nafhat ul Uns, p.418; Tarikh-i-Guzida, p.667.
 3. Nafhat ul Uns, p.420.

being eminent Suhrawardi Saints came to India and established their Khanqahs in different part of India, namely Shaikh Jalal uddin Tabrizi¹ settled at Bengal² some other Chief disciples were Qazi Hamidu'ddin Nagaur³ (d. 1274 A.D.)

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1. A reputed saint of Tabriz (Persia), originally a disciple of Shaikh Badru'ddin Abu Sa'id Tabrizi, later on he became a disciple of Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi also. The Shaikh is reported to have migrated towards India, when he reached Delhi, Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1200-36 A.D.) welcomed him with great honour and respect. But Shaikh Najmu'ddin Sughra (Shaikh ul Islam) grew jealous of his influence, brought false charges of adultery against him but the Shaikh was exonerated publicly. Shaikh Jalal uddin Tabrizi left for Bengal, where he is reported to have converted large number of Hindus to Islam, constructed a Khanqah there and made numerous disciples. See: Amir Hasan Sijzi, Fawa'id ul Fu'ad, Lucknow, 1894, pp.99, 132-3.
Siyar ul Arifin, Roto. ff.123-6.
 Amir Khusrau, Afzal-ul-Fu'ad, Delhi, 1888, Vol.I, p.47.
 Maulana Hamid Qalandar, Khair ul Majalis, Aligarh, 1959, pp.79-80, 191-3.
 Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi, Akhbar-ul-Akhbar, Delhi, 1914, pp.44-7.
 2. The tomb of Shaikh Jalalu'ddin Tabrizi is located at Hazrat Pandua, 20 miles from Gaur, Six miles from Malda. It is popularly known as Bari Dargah or Bais Hazari (because the property attached to the Dargah yielded an income of Rs. Twenty two thousand), See; A. Cunningham, ASIR, Vol.XI, pp.79-80; Abid Ali Khan, Memoirs of Gaur and Panduah, Ed. by H.E. Stepleton, Calcutta, 1924, p.97;
 LAMB, 1895; A.Rahim, JPHS, July 1960, Vol.III, p.111 & 215.
 3. He was one of the most learned Scholars of his age who used to pass his days in mystic songs and dance, much against the traditions of his ancestors, see: Fawa'id ul Fu'ad pp.128-214; Khair-ul-Majalis, pp.245-247;
Siyar ul Arifin, Roto, ff.147-151;
Akhbar ul Akhbar, pp.37-44; Gulzar-i-Abrar, Roto, No.174, f.25.

Saiyid Nuruddīn Mubarak Ghaznavi¹ (d.1234, at Delhi), Maulana Majduddīn Hajī,² Shaikh Ziauddīn Rumi³ and Shaikh Bahauddīn Zakariya⁴ (d.1262 A.D.) at Multan.

But the credit for organizing and popularizing the Suhrawardi order in India goes mainly to Shaikh Bahauddīn Zakariya, and Saiyid Jalaluddīn Surkh-i-Bukhari⁵ (d.1291 A.D.) who established a strong Suhrawardi center at Uchch.

1. See Fawa'id ul Fawad, p.193.

Ziauddīn Barani, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, pp.41-44;

Akhbar ul Akhyar, pp.29-9.

2. Akhbar ul Akhyar, p.50.

3. Akhbar ul Akhyar, p.73.

4. He was born at Kot-Aror (near Multan) in 1182-83 A.D.

He is reported to have travelled widely in Muslim lands such as, Khwarizm, Hejaz, Medina, palestine and studied the political, social condition of the people. He became the disciple of Shaikh Shihabuddīn Suhrawardi and settled down at Multan, established his Khangah there, worked for more then half a century to popularise the order among the masses. He died in Multan in December 1262 A.D. See;

Fawa'id-ul-Fuad, pp.5-6, 134-5;

Khair-ul-Majalis, pp.131-37 and 283;

Siyar ul Arifin, ff. 102-128;

Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, pp.26-28;

Gulzar-i-Abrar. Roto. f.31;

Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.III, p.403;

5. He was a disciple of Shaikh Sadruddīn Arif (d.1285 A.D.), son and chief Khalifa (successor) of Shaikh Bahauddīn

Zakariya. See; for details, Siyar ul Arifin, Roto, ff.155-6; Akhbar ul Akhyar, p.61.

QADIRI ORDER

The founder of this order, Shaikh Mohiuddin Abdul Qadir Gilani¹ (1077-1166 A.D.) of Baghdad, was one of the most outstanding saints in the annals of Islamic mysticism.

This order was introduced in India by Shah Niamatullah and Makhdum Muhammad Gilani (d.1517 A.D.) who settled at Uchch. Makhdum Muhammad Gilani was succeeded by his son Makhdum Abdul Qadir. Other famous mystics of this order were Shaikh Daud Kirmani and Shaikh Abul Maali Qadiri of Lahore.

According to a tradition Saiyid Muhammad Qadir² was

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1. For his biographical Sketch see, Bahjat ul Asrar by Ali Ibn Yusuf ash-Shattanawfi (d.1314) which was written over a hundred years after the death of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Gilani. It is a lengthy work in three volumes on his life and works containing miracles. The shorter and still later notice of adh-Dhahabi (d.1348), but based on Ibn an Najjar, edited and translated by Dr. D.S. Margoliouth (JRAS 1907, pp.267-310) is more valuable because he adopts a critical attitude and is sceptical of the more extravagant type of miracles ascribed to Abdul Qadir Gilani. For his discourses see, al-Fath al-Rabbani; a collection of 62 sermons delivered in A.H.545-6; Futuh al-Ghaib (tran. W.Braune, Leipzig, 1933) collection of his 78 most important discourses. See, J.S. Trimingham, Sufi Orders in Islam pp.40-41.
 2. A direct descendant of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Gilani of Baghdad, was born in 1413 A.D. He is reported to have reached Narahna (Gaya distt. Bihar) along with several other saints and saved the oppressed Muslims from the atrocities of notorious Kol Chief of that locality. See, Saiyid Hasan Askari, PIHRC, 1950, Vol.XXVII, Pt.II, pp.108-110; P.C. Roy Chaudhury, B.D.G. Gaya, 1957, p.36; R.R.Diwakar, Bihar Through the Ages, p.451,

the first saint of this order to establish and popularise this order in the interior regions of Gaya distt. (Bihar).

NAQSHBANDI ORDER

It was founded by Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi¹ (1317-1388 A.D.) and was introduced in India rather late by Khwaja Baqi Billah² (1563-1603 A.D.). Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi³ (d.1624 A.D.)

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1. It was an off shoot of Khwajgan order, founded by Khwaja Ahmad, popularly known as Ata Yasvi (d.1166 A.D.). But this order was consolidated and popularized under the guidance of Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi to such an extent that after his death this order came to be known as Naqshbandi order, see for details, Nafhat-ul-Uns, pp.384-389.
 2. Khwaja Baqi Billah Abu'l Muayyid Razi ud Din also called Muhammad Baqi b. Abd ul Salama Uwaysi Naqshbandi born at Kabul on 5th Dhul Hijja 971/16th Dec., 1563 A.D. He received his elementary education from Sadiq Halwai and went to Samarqand for higher study. After a short Sojourn in India he returned to Mawara al Nahr and enrolled himself under Naqshbandi order. In 1599 A.D. he again returned to India and settled down at Delhi. (Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Ed. Vol.I, p.957.) According to T.W. Arnold, this order was introduced in India by Shaikh Ahmad Faruqi Sirhindi (d.1625A.D.) see, An Introduction to the History of Sufism, p.13.
 3. He was born at Sirhind (Patiala State, East Punjab) in 1564A.D. He received elementary education under his father Shaikh Abd al Ahad, and went to Sialkot for higher study, and was initiated into the Naqshbandi order by Khwaja Baqi Billah. He has written several books on theology and mysticism and his letters have been collected and published under the title Maktubat-e-Imam Rabbani. For biographical references, see, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Eng. tran. Alexander Rogers, Delhi, 1978, Vol.II, PP.91-2; Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.) Vol.I, PP.297-8.

popularly known as Mujaddid-i-Alf-e-Sani. (Reformer of the second Millennium) was one of the outstanding disciples of Khwaja Baqi Billah, who severely criticised the theory of Wahdat-ul-Wujud and advocated a new theory called Wahdat-ul-Shauhud.

SHATTARI¹ ORDER

The Shattari order is associated with Shah Abdullah Shattari² (d.1485 A.D.), who was the disciple of Shaikh Muhammed Arif, a descendant of Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi and fifth in line of spiritual successor from Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra. This silsilah was introduced in India by Shah Abdullah Shattari who made his centre of activities at Mandu. This order became popular under the guidance of his chief disciple Shaikh Muhammad Qazan

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1. The word Shattar is derived from the Arabic word 'Shatr,' meaning to move in a certain direction. Shaikh Abdullah in his book 'Lataif-i-Ghaibia' has described three different methods of spiritual training i.e. Akhyar, Abrar and Shattar.
 2. He is reported to have travelled widely in Persia, Iraq and then came to India passed through Jaunpur and met Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (d.1440 A.D.) at Jannpur. He then visited Bihar, Bengal and finally settled in Mandu (M.P.)
See; Gulzar-i-Abrar, Roto, No.174, Vol.I, f.151.
Abdur Rahman b. Abdul Rashid Chishti, Mir'at ul Asrar, Ms. M.A.L, Aligarh ff.354a-355a;
Abdus Samad, Akhbar ul Asfiya, Ms, MAL, Aligarh, f.79,b.

Shattari in Bihar, Bengal and other regions.¹

KHANQAH:

Justifying the construction and maintenance of Khanqahs Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi has quoted the following Qur'anic ayat, which legalises and specifies the house for the purpose of devotion and remembrance of God.²

"In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings. Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping

1. Shaikh Muhammad Qazin Shattari, reported to be a direct descendant of Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih (the traditional conqueror of Maner in 1180 A.D.), whose tomb is located at Basrah in Muzaffarpur Dist, Bihar. His third and most famous son was Shaikh Abul Fatah Hadiatullah Sarmast, (d.1540 A.D.) (of Tankol near Hajipur, Bihar) Whose disciple Shaikh Zahur Haji Hamiduddin (d.1523 A.D.) of Ratan Sarai, Gopalganj Subdivision, Saran District Bihar) enrolled two famous disciples, among them, Shaikh Khatiruddin alias Muhammed Shattari (d.1562 A.D.) is one who has produced the famous book Gulzar-i-Abrar. See,
 S.H. Askari, JBORS, 1951, Vol.XXXVII, pp.69-77;
 Maulavi Hamid Kuraishi, List of Ancient Monument protected under Act, VII of 1904, in the provinces of Bihar and Orissa, (ASI) New Imperial Series, 1931, Vol.LI, p.26;
 A. Cunningham, ASI, 1880, Vol.XVI, p.89;
 R.C. Roy Chaudhary, BDG, 1957, p.237;
 D.R. Ratil, Antiquarian Remains in Bihar, Vol.IV, PP.28-9.
2. See, Awarif-ul-Ma'arif, (Urdu tran.) Chap. 13, P.143..

up of prayer and the giving of poor rate; they fear a day in which the hearts and the eyes shall turn about." (QXXIV:36-37).

The first Khanqah, according to Jami, was constructed by a Christian Amir at Ramla, the capital of Palestine, for Abu Hashim Kufi (d.150/767 A.D.)¹. Later with the expansion of Sufism numerous Khanqahs emerged throughout the Islamic world, where the Sufis and their followers lived a secluded life and devoted themselves exclusively to the worship of Allah.

It was during the first half of the eleventh century A.D. that Shaikh Abu Sa'id B. Abil Khayr² (d. 440/1048 A.D.) laid down ten rules for the members of the Khanqah.

1. Nafhat-ul-Uns, p.32.

2. He was a Persian born mystic belonged to Mena (Khurasan). He remained in the companion of Abul Abbas al-Qassab of Amul who offered him Khiraga (Patched garment). His biography was written by his descendant Muhammad b. Abi Rawh Lutf Allah. B. Abi Sa'id B. Abi Tahil B. Abi Said B. Abil Khayr, under the title of Hatal-u-Sukhunan-i-Shaikh Abu Sa'id B. Abil Khayr, Edt. by V. Zhukowshi, St. Petersburg, 1899. See, Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Ed.) Vol.I, P.145; R.A. Nicholson, Studies in Islamic Mysticism, Delhi, 1976, PP.1-75.

1. Let them keep their garments clean and themselves always pure.
2. Let them not sit in the mosque or in any holy place for the sake of gossiping.
3. In the first instance let them perform their prayers in common.
4. Let them pray much at night.
5. At dawn let them ask forgiveness of God and call unto Him.
6. In the morning let them read as much of the Holy Qur'an as they can, and let them not talk until the Sun has risen.
7. Between evening prayers and bedtime prayers let them occupy themselves with repeating some litany (Wird U Zikr).
8. Let them welcome the poor and needy and all who join their company, and let them bear patiently the trouble of (waiting upon) them.
9. Let them not eat anything save in participation with one another.
10. Let them not absent themselves without receiving permission from one another.¹

ORIGIN OF KHANQAH BY MAHMUD AL KASHANI:

The author of Misbah al Hidaya, has connected the development of Khanqah with the Suffa (estrade or raised floor). It has resemblances (mushabahti) with the Suffa, which was the dwelling place of the poor companions (Ashab-e-Suffa), who had

1. R.A. Nicholson, OP.Cit. p.46.

no resting places of their own.¹

CUSTOMS PREVALENT AT THE KHANQA:

The residents of the Khanqah could be divided into two categories:

the travellers and
the dwellers.

When the former stayed at the Khanqah temporarily for a few days. While the latter lived there permanently observing the prescribed code of conduct.

Benefits of the Khanqah are as follows:

1. That building became a place of halt and rest for the group of Sufis for whom there is no shelter or living house or residences. In other words, those faqirs (mendicants) who possess no dwelling place of their own, Khanqah serves as a place of abode for all of them.

1. Mahmud Ali Kashani, Misbah u'l Hidaya, Persian trans. of Awarif ul Ma'arif, Ms. f.76, a.b.

But, according to Spencer J. Trimingham it was from the Karramiyyans that the Sufis adopted the Khanqah system (Sufi Orders in Islam, PP.6-7). The Karramiyyan sect was founded by Mohammad Ibn Karram (d.869 A.D.). Al-Muqaddasi calls them men of abstinence (zuhd) and devotion to God (tabbud). This group was reported to have flourished above all the Khurasan, Transoxania, Jurjan, Tabaristan and those of the West of Jerusalem and around the tomb of their spiritual leader, Ibn. Karram.

See, Encyclopaedia of Islam. (New Ed.) Vol.IV, P.102.

It is due to the Khanqah that faqirs and Sufis get opportunity to live together, perform prayer in congregation, eat together, talk and converse with each other on various problems. In this way they become friendly with each other and this results universal brotherhood.

One of the most significant benefits for this group is that by living together and meeting each other they bring blessings for their relatives and friends.

The third and the most important benefit for this group is that when they became acquainted with the personal life of each other, everyone tries to look after his own actions so that he may not be blamed by other Sufis.¹

By the twelfth century A.D. many Khanqah had become rich and flourishing establishments, Ibn Jubair, who travelled (1183-85 A.D.) in the near East in Saladin's time writes about Damascus that, Ribats for Sufis, which were known as Khawaniq were numerous. They were ornamented palaces through all of which flowed streams of water, presenting as delightful a picture as anyone could wish for. The members of this type of Sufi organization were not concerned with the need to earn their living so they devoted themselves to His service.²

1. Misbah ul-Hidaya, Ms. f.76, a b.

2. The Travels of Ibn Jubair, ed. W. Wright and M.J. de Goeje, 2nd ed. 1907, p.284.

BAI'AT:

When a novice wanted to join any specific mystic order, he had to give his hand in the hands of the spiritual master declaring that he had repented (tauba) from his past sins and hereafter promised to lead a life of chastity in accordance with the Shara and to follow the discipline and the practices prescribed by the Shaikh of that order.

According to the provisions of some silsilahs the head of a new entrant was shaved, whereas, sometimes a cap was placed on his head.

KHIRQA'

The spiritual head of the Khanqah (Pir) usually granted Khirqah¹ (patched garments) to his disciples generally after three years of service at the Khanqah.

It was regarded as an outward sign of the disciple's entrance upon the path and a sign that he had abandoned himself, entirely in the hands of the Shaikh.²

1. It was of two kinds: Khirqah-al-iradat (Khirqah of discipleship and Khirqah-al-tabarruk (Khirqah of blessing), the former was granted to one who had a sincere desire for God and the latter to a novice about whom the Shaikh had a good report. See Awarif ul Ma'arif, Eng. tran. Lieut. Col. H. Wilberforce Clarke, Delhi, 1984, p.65.

2. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p.254.

Khilafat Namahs or the warrant of vicegerency was conferred by a Sufi on his disciple who was allowed to preach and admit others in the mystical order of his guide.¹

SAMA' (AUDITION PARTY):

'Sama' literary meaning 'hearing', often passing into the thing heard, like music and hearing music, also like istima. The word does not occur in the Holy Qur'an but it belongs to old Arabic even in the meaning, a singing or musical performance.

In Sufiism the term is applied in the sense of listening to music, singing, Chanting and measured recitation in order to produce religious emotion and ecstasy (Wajd) and also such performance by voice or instrument.²

According to Imam Ghazzali, Law (Shari'at) never proves that 'Sama' or religious songs are unlawful. Moreover, he says Ghina means songs which includes Sama' or religious songs. Ordinarily it means sweet sound which is of two kinds: (1) rhythmical sound (2) simple sound. Rhythmical sounds are of two kinds: understandable like poetry or not understandable like the sounds of animals. Sama', means religious songs with sweet voice. It cannot

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1. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Saviours of Islamic spirit, Eng. tran. by Muhiuddin Ahmad, Vol.II, p.361.
 2. Encyclopaedia of Islam, (old ed.) London, 1934, Vol.IV, PP.120-1.

be unlawfu, rather it is lawful on the basis of some Hadith.

While justifying Sama', he quotes the following traditions that the Prophet of Islam once said "God did not send any Prophet without sweet sound." He also said, "If a man recites the Holy Qur'an with sweet sound, God hears his recitation more than one hears the songs of his female singers."

According to another tradition, the Prophet praised Prophet David saying that "David used to sing with so melodious sound that man, jinn, beasts and birds gathered together spell bound to hear it.

The Prophet erected a pulpit within the mosque for the poet Hassan b. Sabet. He used to standup on it and recite poetry deprecating the unbelievers and praising the Prophet. The Prophet than said: "God is helping Hassan with the Holy spirit till he declares glory on behalf of the Prophet."¹

Although, three out of the four schools of feligious jurisprudence, like, Imam Safi'i in his book Adab-e-Qaza, Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifa they all condemned and prohibited Sama'.²

But, the Sufis like, Shaikh Junaid of Baghdad, Shaikh Sari Saqati, Zun Nun Misri, Muhasibi used to hear Sama'.

According to J.A. Subhan, "To the early mystics of Islam the formal recitation of Qur'an took the place of music, and

1. Dhya-ul-ulum uddin, Vol.II, p.205.

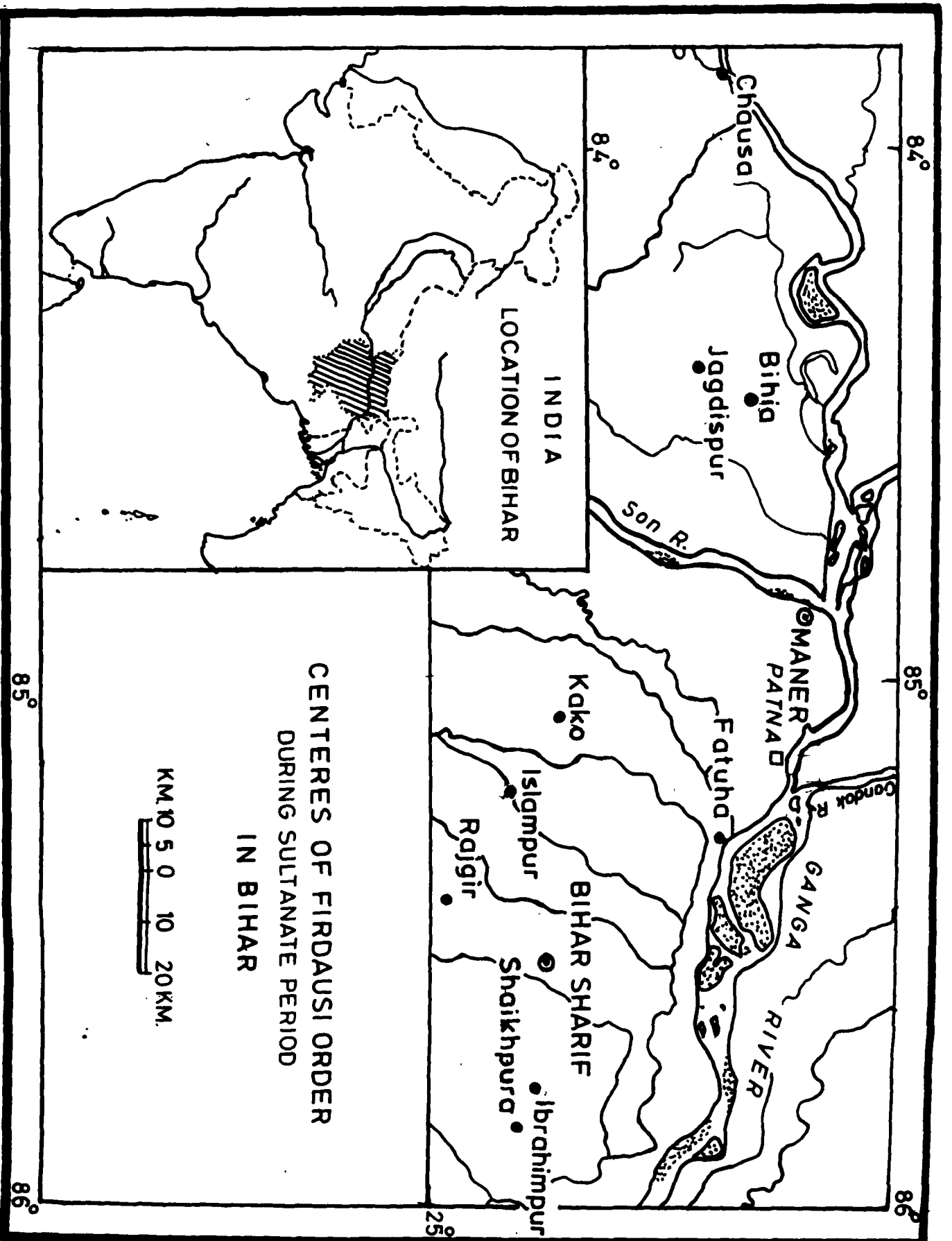
2. Ibid, Vol.II, p.203.

that was enough to move their hearts and arouse their emotions. At a later stage, recitation of poetry and a rendering of musical compositions were also permitted on the basis of some traditions attributed to Muhammad and his companions. At some yet later date in the development of Sufism certain mystics adopted music as a means of inducing ecstasy, there by giving rise to sharp differences of opinion."¹

According to Prof. K.A. Nizami, "Some mystics emphasized the efficacy of audition parties (Sama') in the formation of a spiritual personality. Songs, they said, not only relieved the strain of a man's emotions but quickened his emotional response and attuned his heart to the Infinite and the Eternal. Sama', or qawwali, consequently, became one of the popular institutions of medieval mysticism and the common man, incapable of comprehending the mystic principles at a higher level, readily accepted its ceremonial aspect."²

1. See; J.A. Subhan, Sufism its Saints and Shrines, Lucknow, 1938. p.112.

2. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century, p.62.



CHAPTER-II

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF FIRDAUSI ORDER AND ITS EXPANSION IN INDIA

The first saint bearing the title 'Firdausi' was Shaikh Ruknuddin, who was one of the spiritual descendants of Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra whose silsilah after his name had come to be known as Kubrawiyya order.

As Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra was the disciple of Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Abdul Qahir Suhrawardi (d.1167 A.D.), so Firdausi order is basically an offshoot of the Kubrawiyya branch of the Suhrawardi order.¹

SHAIKH RUKNUDDIN FIRDAUSI (d.1323 A.D.)

Shaikh Ruknuddin was born in India and was the son of a reputed Saint Shaikh Imadu'ddin. Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi,

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1. This fact has been confirmed on the basis of the following genealogical table of spiritual lineage of the Firdausi order mentioned in various books, such as:

Shaikh Sharafuddin yahya al Maneri. Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi. Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi. Shaikh Badruddin Samarqandi. Shaikh Saifuddin Bakharzi. Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra. Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Abdul Qahir Suhrawardi.

See; Ma'ān ul Ma'āni, Malfuzat of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, Compiled by Zain Badr 'Arabi, Ms. MAL, Aligarh, Chap.22, f.105, b.

Maqz-ul-Ma'āni, Malfuzat of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, compiled by Shaikh Shihabuddin Ahmad Siddiqi, Ms. KBOPL, Patna, Maj.31, ff.57, b. and 58 a-b;

Siyar ul Arifin, Roto, f.101;

Gulzar-i-Abrar, Roto. Vol.I, f.56.

along with his elder brother Nizamuddin was brought by his father before Saiyid Amir Khurd and other reputed saints of his time. Saiyid Amir Khurd entrusted Ruknuddin to Shaikh Badruddin Samarqandi¹ (d. 1316 A.D.) under whose guidance he attained perfection in theology and mystic discipline and later became his Khalifa (successor) also.

It was Shaikh Badruddin who conferred the title of 'Firdausi' on Shaikh Ruknuddin.² Thus, Shaikh Ruknuddin was the first Indian Sufi after whose name a mystic order originated and flourished in India.

According to Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, it was Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi who for the first time introduced and popularised the institution of Urs (celebration of death ---

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1. He was the disciple of Shaikh Saifu'ddin Bakharzi (d.1260A.D.) of Bukhara and contemporary of Shaikh Bakhtiyar Kaki (d.1235 A.D.). He is reported to have laid much emphasis on the concept of Love of God (mahabbat) and religious education for a Sufi. He specially declared that the Law (Shari'at) should be followed strictly in order to have nearness to God. He used to say that knowledge (ilm) without action (amal) is useless and action without sincerity is fruitless. He warned his followers against expressing miraculous (Karamat) powers. He was found of Sama' (audition party).

See; Manaqib ul Asfiya, Ms.f.121; Khair-ul-Majalis, Maj.55, pp.185-6.

Mir'at-ul-Asrar, Ms. f.234,b;

Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, pp.112-3;

Khazinat-ul-Asfiya, Vol.II, pp.184-5.

2. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.83.

anniversary of particular saint at his tomb) in India. He is reported to have participated in the Urs ceremony.¹

When Sultan Muizuddin Kaiqubad² established a beautiful palace at Kailugarhi Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi also established his Khanqah there.³

1. Moreover, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri informs us some significant references about the early life of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya that, "At the time Shaikh Nizamuddin had recently arrived at Ghiyaspur where he had begun to reside, and had not yet acquired much fame but, day by day his spiritual riches and blessings went on increasing. Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi used to invite Shaikh Nizamuddin to feast day celebrations and he would participate in them.

The mother of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi was a remarkable woman. She had been blessed so abundantly that she was referred to as a 'Shaikh'. One day she said to Shaikh Ruknuddin, 'what sort of a man is this Nizamuddin Badayuni, living in Ghiyaspur, concerning whom people are saying so much and how could I see him? Shaikh Ruknuddin replied, 'I shall invite him for a feast day and prepare a special seat for him in the majalis (assembly)'. Consequently, she saw him (Nizamuddin) and then remarked, 'I saw a light (noor) on his forehead which indicated that he would do something in Delhi which has not been done or achieved by any body else.'

See; Khwan-i-Pur Niamat, Ms. Maja.40, f.130.

2. Muizuddin Kaiqubad ascended the throne of Delhi in 1287 A.D., who built a magnificent palaces on the bank of river Jamuna at Kailugarhi and began to live there in pleasure and revelry. See, Muhammad Habib and K.A. Nizami, Comprehensive History of India of the Delhi Sultanate, (1206-1526 A.D.), Delhi, Vol.V, P.303.
3. Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamdani, Kalimat-us-Sadeqin, Ms. KBPOL, f.61 a-b;
Mirat ul Asrar, Ms. f.234, b; Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p.113.

SHAIKH NAJIBUDDIN FIRDAUSI

Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi was the step brother,¹ disciple and Khalifa (successor) of Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdausi, who took care of him from his childhood and it was under his guidance that Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi completed his religious and mystical education.

Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi preferred seclusion and disliked fame and popularity. He used to say, "The friends of God (Auliya-e-Allah) are those who remain concealed from general people, only God knows them." He lived in Delhi where he died in 1332 A.D.²

One of his eminent disciples was Maulana Fariduddin Alam of Indrapat, the compiler of Fatwah-i-Tatar-Khanayah.³

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1. Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi was the son of Shaikh Imadu'ddin Dehlawi, whose mother was the daughter of Saiyid Amir Khurd. See, Khwan-i-Pur Ni'amat, Ms. f.129.
 2. His tomb is located just on the Eastern side of Masjid Auliya, near Hauz Shamsi in a walled boundary in Delhi. The date of death given by Ghulam Sarwar has been corroborated with the date mentioned in the Inscription, found at the tomb of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi recorded by Archaeological Survey of India, List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments of Delhi, 1920, Vol.III, pt. III, Entry No.185; Khazinat-ul-Asfiya, Vol.II, p.288. For biographical sketch see also, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p.113; Akhbar-ul-Asfiya, Ms.f.40, a-b.
 3. Shams Siraj Afif, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, Cal.1891, p.392.

MUKHDUM-I-JAHAN¹ SHAIKH SHARAFUDDIN² AHMAD YAHYA AL-MANERI

He was born on 26th Shaban 661 A.H./July 1263³ A.D. at Maner⁴ whose original name was Ahmad, where as, 'Sharafuddin' (glory of the faith) and Makhdum-i-Jahan are the titles. His father's name was Shaikh Yahya⁵ Maneri.

1. Meaning 'master of the World', addressed by Saiyid Jalal Bukhari (d. 1384 A.D.) See, Ghulam Arshad Jaumpuri, Ganj-i-Arshadi, Pt.IV, f.116,b.
2. Abul Fazl says that Shaikh Yahya Maneri belonged to both Chishti and the Firdausi orders. He was very keen to have a son and went to Shaikh Sharafuddin bu-Aji Qalandar (d.1324 A.D.) of Panipath to seek his blessings. The Saint is reported to have foretold the birth of a son to him and bade him to name the child after his (Bu-Aji's) name. Akbar Nama, Calcutta, 1887, pp.94-5; Akhbar ul Asfiya, Ms. ff.456-46 a.
3. This date of birth is derived from the Chronogram 'Sharaf Ageen', mentioned by Sufi Maneri in the Wasila-i-Sharaf wa Zaria-i-Daulat (Urdu) edt. by M.T. Abdai, Allahabad, 1965, p.64. It has been accepted by modern scholars like: Zamiruddin Ahmad Azimabadi, Sirat-us-Sharaf, (Urdu), Patna, 1901. P.40; Moinuddin Dardai, Tarikh-i-Silsilah-i-Firdausiya, (Urdu), Gaya, 1962, P.139; Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Tarikh Dawat wa Azimat, (Urdu), Lucknow, 1978, Vol.III, P.129.
4. A very old village situated on the right bank of the river Son at its confluence with the Ganges, 20 miles West of Patna 10 miles from Danapur Cantonment, 5 miles from Bihta Railway Station in Patna District, Bihar.
5. The genealogical table of his ancestors is as follows: Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri Bin Shaikh Yahya Maneri, B. Shaikh Israel B. Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih, B. Imam Abu Bakr, B. Imam Abdul Fatah, B. Imam Abdul Qasim, B. Imam Abu Saim, B. Imam Abu Dahrah, B. Imam Abul Lais, B. Imam Abu Shahma, B. Imam Abu Dain, B. Imam Abu Masud, B. Imam Abu Darda, B. Abdul Mutlib, B. Abul Hashim, Abdul Mannaf. See Tahqiqat ul Maani or Malfuz Mubarak, Malfuzat of Maulana Amun, Ms.KBOPL, Maj.1,f.3.

His mother Bibi Razia¹ was a pious lady and the daughter of Shaikh Shihabuddin Pir Jagjaut² of Jethauli.³

1. It is said that she used to give her son milk only after performing ablution. One day she left her son (Sharafuddin Maneri) sleeping in the cradle (qahwara) alone and had gone to the neighbouring house for some work. When returned she saw a man sitting near cradle and fanning the baby in order to make him asleep. This dreadful personality caused her senseless, but as soon as she regained her sense she reported this incident to her father, who could visualize the saintliness of the baby and foretold that her son would be a great saint in future.
See, Manaqib ul Asfiya, Ms. f.82,b;
Mirat ul Asrar Ms. f.264, a.
2. According to a local tradition he was the ruler of Kashghar but renounced the world and became an ascetic. He wandered from one place to another and finally settled down at Jethauli. He was one of the oldest Saints of Bihar and almost all Saints of Bihar traced their descent from him, who is reported to have obtained Khilafatnama from Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi and thus claimed to become the first Saint to introduce the Suhrawardi order in Bihar. He had four daughters, the eldest Bibi Razia married to Shaikh Yahya Maneri.
His tomb is famous as Kachchi Dargah, an annual Urs or Mela held on 24th Day of the Zilkuda to commemorate the death anniversary of the Saint.
See, Dr. Mojibur Rehman, Indo-Iranica, Vol.XXXV, 1982, P.97; Muhammad Tayyab Abdali, Op.Cit. P.13;
N.Kumar, B.D.G. Patna, 1970, P.643;
D.R.Patil, Op.Cit. P.14.
3. The village is located eight miles East of Patna, on Patna Bakhtiyarpur road in Patna Distt. Bihar.

It is reported that the family of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri hailed from Jeru salem. According to the tradition still popular among the local people, Shaikh Momin Arif¹ who hailed from Yeman came to Bihar and settled down at Maner. He left Maner as he had been persecuted by the local Chief and went to Medina, where he is said to have met Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih. The latter along with his followers offered to assist him. Thus, a band of mendicants, so runs the tradition, entered Bihar and fought against the local chief. The latter was defeated and killed.²

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1. His grave is still pointed out to the North-West of Inspection Bungalow in Maner. The Urs or Mela is held in the month of Rabi ul Awwal with due ceremonies annually. A large number of inhabitants of Maner do claim their descent from him. See, Hafiz Shamsuddin Ahmad, AIOCP & T, Patna, 1930, p.137.
 2. This tradition with slight variations has been reported by a number of writers.
 See, for instance, Hafiz Shamsuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. PP.126-8;
 Maulana Abu Mahfuz ul Karim Masumi, Indo-Iranica, 1882, Vol.XXXV, No.1-2, PP.1-19;
 Saiyid Yusuf Kamal Bukhari, EIAPS, 1951-2, P.134;
 D.R. Patil, Op.Cit. PP.260-3;
 Maulavi Muhammad Hamid Kureshi, Op.Cit. PP.62-3;
 N.Kumar Op.Cit. p.663;
 Journal of F. Buchanan, Patna and Gaya distt. (Edited with notes and introduction by V.H. Jackson), JBORS. 1922, Vol.VIII, Pt.3-4, P.355;
 Paul Jackson, S.J. The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri, Delhi, 1987, P.16;
 Saiyid Shamim Ahmad, Urdu, July 1963, Vol.LXII, p.350.

After the victory, Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih is said to have returned to Arabia leaving behind his sons and grand sons to rule over the newly conquered territory.¹

Later, Shaikh Israel² is claimed to have handed over the territory to Bakhtiyar Khalji.³

Although no historical evidence is available to confirm or contradict this tradition yet several other traditions associated with some saints believed to be the companions of Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih and their tombs, however, lend some support to this tradition.

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1. Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih had three sons, Shaikh Israel, Shaikh Ismail and Shaikh Abdul Aziz, See, (Tahqiqat-ul-Ma'ani, Ms, Majlis, 1.), Shaikh Israel, the eldest son is reported to have taken over the charge of the newly conquered territory of Maner, Shaikh Ismail who settled down at Tirhut was the ancestor of Shaikh Abul Faiz Muhammad Qazin Shattari of Basra; Shaikh Abdul Aziz settled at Shaikhpura (Monghyr distt.), whose son Sulaiman Langar Zamin married the daughter of Shaikh Shihabuddin Pir Jagjot, Shah Shoaib the author of Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, was one of his descendants. See, Muhammad Tayyab Abdali Op.Cit. pp.76-7.
 2. Hafiz Shamsuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. P.127; Maulana Muradullah, Athar-i-Maner, (Urdu) P.30.
 3. Curiously enough, no contemporary authority gives the exact date of the conquest of Bihar by Bakhtiyar Khalji, yet he seems to have captured it in or about 1202 A.D., which is based on indirect references found in Taa'j-ul-Ma'asir and Tabaqat-i-Nasiri. For detailed discussion see, Aziz Ahmad, Early Turkish Empire of Delhi, 1206-1290, pp.109-10; A.B.M. Habibullah, The Foundation of Muslim rule in India, P.70.

The tomb of Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih's companions are believed to be situated at Mehdawan,¹ Sharafuddin Pur,² Maner³ Sasaram⁴ etc.

EDUCATION:

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri received his rudimentary education under the guidance of his father in Maner. He is reported to have memorised several text books including chapters from Miftah ul Lughat⁵ (A key to words) and thus had completed his education with full devotion under the

1. The tomb of Shaikh Qutub Salar, reportedly the standard bearer of Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih, located at Mehdawan, two miles East of Maner.

2. The tomb of Burhanuddin is situated in Sharafuddinpur near Bahpura village.

3. The tomb of Hussain Khan who was a comrade of Imam Taj Faqih situated at Maner.

4. The tomb of Shah Burhan Roshan Shahid is located on a hillock of Sasaram.

See, S.H. Askari, BPP, 1946-7, Vol.LXVI, No.129, PP.33-4;
Maulavi Fasihuddin Balkhi, Tarikh-i-Magadh, (Urdu)
PP.94-6;

Hafiz Shamsuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. PP.123-4.

5. Ma'ān ul Ma'āni, Ms. Chap5, f.26, b.

supervision of Maulana Sharafuddin Abu Tawama¹ at Sonargaon.²

1. An erudite scholar and a renowned teacher, who is reported to have hailed from Bukhara and migrated towards India during the reign of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban (1228-81 A.D.). He lived for sometimes in Delhi and was engaged in dispersing education, but owing to his growing influence and fame among the masses within a short span of time, the then Sultan ordered him to leave Delhi and to settle at Sonargaon. He set out for Sonargaon and on the way of his journey he became honourable guest of Shaikh Yahya of Maner and it was during his sojourn at Maner, he was deeply touched with the ability and eagerness for learning knowledge of the young Sharafuddin and he persuaded Shaikh Yahya to accompany his son with him to Sonargaon and his request was accepted. The Maulana also reported to have established a Madarsa cum Khanqah at Sonargaon where students from different places came to acquire Knowledge.
See. Khwan-i-Pur Ni'amat, Ms. Majalis, 6, f.15;
Manaqib ul Asfiya, Ms. ff.82 b, 83 a;
Maktubat-i-Saiyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, recorded by Haji Abdul Razaq Simnani, Jilani, Ms. MAL, Aligarh, Letter-46.
2. A town near Dacca, it was the capital of the independent Muslim rulers of Eastern India, during the time of the Pathan Sultanate of Delhi. Sonargaon in the 14th century A.D. seems to have been renowned for holy learned men. It swarmed with Pirs, faqirs and other religious mendicants to a greater extent than any other Indian city. Dr.J.Wise, Notes on the Sonarqaon, JASE, 1874, Vol,XLIII, Pt.I,p.134; See, also, Dr. Muhammad Shaghier Hasan Masumi Maa, Jan, 1958, Vol.LXXXIII, No.1, PP.65-72.

Besides the formal sciences¹ he had gone through several books on Sufiism² also under the direction of his teacher.

MARRIAGE:

The contemporary sources do not throw much light on the marriage or family life of the Shaikh except that he had married his Kaniz (concubine),³ who bore him a son named Zakiuddin. But, a later source says that he had married -

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1. He learned the following branches of knowledge.
The Science of Grammar, accident and Etymology.
Mathematics, Geometry. The Science of Astronomy.
The Explanatory Science, i.e. Rhetoric, Oratory
and eloquence, Prosody; The art of letter-writing.
The Science of Religion; The Science of Tradition.
The Science of Theology. The Science of Ethics, Morals
and Etiquette, The Science of Elocution, Speculative
science and the Contemplative Science. See,
Ata Karim Burke, Indo Iranica, March - Dec. 1981. No.1-4,
Vol.XXXIV, PP.123-4.
 2. See, Maktubat-i-Do-Sadi, Letter, 81.
 3. Shah Shoaib informs that when Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri was engaged in acquiring knowledge at Sonargaon, he was conjoined with a disease (marz-la-haq shud). All the physicians unanimously prescribed, marriage as the only remedy. Consequently, he married his concubine (Kaniz).
See- Manaqib ul Asfiya, Ms. f.83, b;
Ganj-i-Arshadi, Ms. f.110;
Mirat-ul-Asrar, Ms, f.264, a.

Bahu Badan¹ one of the daughters of his teacher Maulana Sharafuddin Abu Tawama. He then entrusted his son to his mother and left home for Delhi along with his elder brother Shaikh Jalil or Jalal Maneri.² There they met several saints but none could impressed them much. Out of disgust the Shaikh said, "If they are Shaikhs than I am second to none."³ They then paid a visit to Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (d.1325 A.D.) and expressed their desire to become his disciples. The Shaikh, however, excused himself on the plea that they were destined to be the disciples of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi.⁴ He was deeply impressed by Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. He blessed him and offered some betel-leaves to him and advised them to go to Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi.

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1. She bore two daughters, Bibi Fatima and Bibi Zuhra. Bibi Fatima married Makhdum Ashraf, son of the elder brother of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, whose descendants still claim as the Sajjadanashin in the Khanqah at Maner. See, Muhammad Tayyab Abadli, Al-sharaf (Urdu) PP.26-8. Dr. Mujibur Rahman, Op.Cit. p.97.
 2. Siyar-ul-Arifin, Roto. f.101.
 3. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, f.83, b. See also, Dr. S.M. Talha Rizwi Barque, Indo-Iranica, 1982, Vol. XXXV, P.110.
 4. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, f.83, b;
Lataif-i-Asharfi, Malfuzat Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, Delhi, 1880, p.376.
 According to Darwesh Jamali, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri along with his brother Shaikh Jalaluddin Muhammad went to Delhi, paid visit to Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, who informed them that, 'They are belonged to the Firdausi order,' consequently both the brothers became disciples of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi. See,
Siyar-ul-Arifin, Roto, f.101.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri then went to Panipat and met Shaikh Sharafuddin Bu Aji Qalandar¹ (d.1324 A.D.), who was a maizub (engrossed in ecstasy) hence could not guide others, as pointed out by Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri.²

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri was not very keen to see Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi also but his elder brother found no harm in meeting the Shaikh. Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri was however convinced and both proceeded to meet Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi. The Shaikh welcomed them with a sarcastic remark that he (Sharafuddin) was chewing betel leaves and thinking himself as a Shaikh.³

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri became nervous and spitted out the betel leaf from his mouth and expressed his desire to become Shaikh's disciple. Consequently, Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi enrolled him into the Firdausi order, offered the Khilafat Nama, which he had prepared twelve years⁴ before, Shaikh Sharafuddin

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1. His father is reported to have migrated from Iraq and settled in Panipat. He did not belong to any mystic order nor he made any disciples. For details see, Shams Siraj Afif, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, Calcutta, 1890, p.28; Akhbar-ul-Akhyar; Gulzar-i-Abrar and Mir'at-ul-Asrar.
 2. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.83, b.
 3. Ibid, Ms.f,84, a.
 4. Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi says, "When Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri went to see Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi, he welcomed the former, "Darwesh! I have been waiting for you since a long time in order to handover your deposit (amanat)" and enrolled him into Firdausi order. (Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p.109). The same passage has been mentioned with slight variations by others also, see for instance, Gulzar-i-Abrar, Roto, Vol.I, f.57; Akhbar-ul-Asfiya, Ms.46, b; Khazinat-ul-Asfiya, Vol.II, p.291.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri's arrival¹ and directed him to return to his native place (Bihar). Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri wanted to serve his Pir for sometime to learn some principles and teachings of the Firdausi order, but Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi told him that he granted him the Ijazatnama under the command (Farman) of the Prophet and that he would receive guidance from the Prophet himself.

He, then set out and was on his way to Bihar that he heard the news of his spiritual master's death.

WANDERING LIFE OF SHAIKH SHARAFUDDIN MANERI:

He, however, continued his journey along with his brother but one night he heard the cry of a peacock, which threw him into spiritual ecstasy. After that, it is said, he disappeared into the dense forest² of Bihea.³

He remained concealed there for about twelve years and no body could know about him. He then wandered for about eighteen

1. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.84, a-b.

2. According to Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri left the company of his brother near Agra.

See, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p.117.

3. A Village in the head-quarters subdivision of Shahabad District, Bihar, situated 32 miles west of Maner, and 382 miles from Calcutta.

See, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Delhi, Vol.VIII, P.173; L.S.S.O'Malley, BODG, Shahabad, P.161.

years in the forest of Rajgir Hills¹ living upon leaves and wild fruits² devoting himself to various spiritual exercises, austerities, self-mortification and chillahs (forty days retreat)³. Thus, he led a wandering life for about 30 years (approximately from 1315 to 1345 A.D.).

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1. A Village about fourteen miles south west of Bihar-Sharif, 40 miles south east of Patna and about six miles south of Nalanda in Patna Distt., Bihar. It represents the ancient city of Rajgriha, and it has become a sacred place of Pilgrimage for Buddhist, Jains, Hindu and Muslim alike.

See, Maulavi Muhammad Hamid Kureshi, Rajgir (ASI) 1956, P.37;

A.M. Broadly, JBORS, 1872, Vol. XLI, PP.233-4;

A. Cunningham. Ancient Geography of India, P.393.

But, Shah Shoaib says, that Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri himself agreed that he remained for 30 years in the forest in wandering life, depending upon solely on green leaves and wild fruits when Qazi Zahid (one of his disciples) asked him in an assembly.

See, Manogib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.87;

Gauharistan, Ms. f.65, a.

2. According Darwesh Jamali, "The Shaikh depended solely upon green leaves and wild fruits for twelve years when he was busy in spiritual exercises like self-mortification and austerity in Rajgir Hills."

Siyar-ul-Arifin, Roto, f.101.

After this long period some people succeeded in tracing him out in the jungle of Rajgir. When the news of his whereabouts spread, other admirers of the Shaikh also began to visit him. Shaikh Nizamuddin Maula, one of the disciples of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and a keen admirer of Shaikh also visited the Shaikh along with some other followers of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, who happened to be in Bihar at that time. The Shaikh felt that his continued stay in jungles was causing inconvenience and trouble to the people who had to come from various towns to see the Shaikh in the dense forest. He, therefore, assured them that he would himself go to the town (Bihar Sharif) where they could see him. Consequently, he used to go to the town and after the Friday prayers his admirers and followers came and sought his blessings. After passing some

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3. According to a local tradition, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri spent forty days in meditation and fast near the spring of Sringgi Rikhi (a place of worship for the Hindus) which afterwards came to be known as Makhdum Kund. Besides that there is one stone cell known as Hujrah (cell), which was used for the purpose of meditation and prayer. According to Muhammad Hamid Kureshi. "Near Vipulla Hill, a small cave is situated in an upper enclosure approached by a broad flight of steps and is said to have been frequently used by Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri."

Muhammad Hamid Kureshi, OpCit. P.37. See, for detail, L.S.S.O'Malley, BODG, Patna, P.232;
A.Cunningham, OpCit. p.393;
D.R. Patil, Op.Cit. P.464;
W.W., Hunter, ASAB, Vol.XI, P.81,
F. Buchanan, JBORS, 1972, Vol.VIII, Pt.3-4, P.130.

time in the midst of the people he used to return to the jungle. This process continued for sometime. But Maulana Nizamuddin Maula and others realised that they themselves causing inconvenience to the Shaikh, who had to come from the jungle to the town. So, they, for his temporary stay, constructed a small mud-house outside the town (at the place where the present Khanqah (hospice) of the Shaikh now stands). Occasionally, he stayed for a day or two in that hut but then went back.¹

Later, at the instance of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughluq (1321-1351 A.D.) a Khanqah was built by Majd-ul-Mulk, the Governor of Bihar, for Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, where he was installed as the Chief Shaikh (Sajjada nashin).²

He then took up the task of organizing his silsilah and training his disciples till his death on 6th Shawwal, 782 A.D./Wednesday 2nd January, 1381 A.D.³

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1. Ganj-i-al Yakhfa, Malfuzat of Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Noshah Tauhid Balkhi, Ms. KBOPL, Patna, f.40, a-b.
 2. Madan-ul-Madani, Ms. Chap. 61, f.261-b.
 3. This day and date was recorded by Zain Badr 'Arabi with full account is known as Wafat Nama.

SHAIKH SHARAFUDDIN MANERI

AND

HIS CONTRIBUTION ON PERSIAN LITERATURE

Maktubat-i-Sadi:

Maktubat-i-Do Sadi

Maktubat bist-o-hasht

Fawaid- Rukni

Sharh. Adab-ul-Muridin.

Agaid Sharfi

Irshad-ul-Salekin

Irshad-ul-Talebin

Ajuba-e-Kakoi

Aurad-e-Khurd

Aurad-e-aust

Aurad-e-Kalan

Malfuzat:

Ma'dan ul Ma'ani

Khwan-i-pur Ni'amat

Ganj-i-la-Yafna

Monis ul Muridin

Bahr ul Ma'ani or Tohfa e Ghaibi or Kanz ul Ma'ani.

Fawaid ul Ghaibi

Malfuz us Safar

Rahat ul Qulub.

DISCIPLES:

After his death the responsibility of organization and expansion of his silsilah fell on the shoulders of his disciples. He had left numerous disciples chief among them being Shaikh Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Qazi Shamsuddin of Chausa, Maulana Nizamuddin Darun-e-Hisari, Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Nausha Tauhid Balkhi, Maulana Amun, Zain Badr 'Arabi, who spread and popularized the silsilah throughout Bihar.

Following are some of the eminent Saints who have made tremendous contributions in the expansion of the Firdausi order in Bihar.¹

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1. Shah Sho'ib informs that according to Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Balkhi, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri had more than 1,00,000 disciples, this seems to be much exaggerated figure. See, Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms.f.90b.

A later source has given a list of about nearly fifty disciples, who were famous for serving the great Shaikh or for their spiritual attainment.

Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi.

Malikzada Fazlullah

Zain Badr 'Arabi

Shah Sho'ib.

Maulana Nasiruddin Jaunpuri

Maulana Nizamuddin Darun-e-Hisari

Shaikh Umar

Qutbuddin

Fakhruddin

Shaikh Sulaiman

Maulana Khwajgi

Khwaja Ahmad

Imam Tajuddin

fn.contd.....

Shaikh Hussain Muiz Nosha Tauhid Balkhi
Maulana Qamruddin
Maulana Abul Qasim
Maulana Abul Hasan
Qazi Sharafuddin
Qazi Minhajuddin Darun-e-Hisari
Maulana Taqiuddin Awadhi
Qazi Shamsuddin
Maulana Shihabuddin Nagauri
Shaikh Khaliluddin
Maulana Rafiuddin
Maulana Adam Hafiz
Qazi Sadruddin
Shamsuddin Khwarizmi
Shaikh Muizuddin
Maulana Karimuddin
Khwaja Hafiz Jalaluddin
Khwaja Hamiduddin Saudagar
Khwaja Mobarak
Zakariya Gharib
Qazi Khan
Najmuddin Shair
Qazi Badruddin Zafarabadi
Maulana Lutfuddin
Ahmad Safeed Baf
Shaikh Zakiuddin
Maulana Nizamuddin, a cousin of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri
Maulana Amun
Maulana Zainuddin
Saiyid Shahbuddin Imad Halfi
Haji Ruknuddin
Maulana Awhaduddin son of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi's
sister.
Saiyid Jalaluddin S/o Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi's sister
Shaikh Wahid uddin
Shaikh Rustam
Shaikh Wajihuddin
See-Zamiruddin Ahmad Azimabadi Op.Cit. pp.115-6;
Ata Karim Burke, Op.Cit. pp.126-7.

ZAIN BADR 'ARABI:

Zain-ul-'Abedin or Zain Badr 'Arabi was a gifted person, a man of learning and a poet. In his youth he was a drunkard. Once in the state of drunkenness he demanded some cash from his mother. She told him whether he had given her something that he was asking for. He felt ashamed and went out and entered the Khangah of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. The Shaikh was sitting on the prayer carpet with his face towards the west. He turned towards Zain Badr and told him to take gold and jewels as much as he could. Zain Badr saw a stream of wealth flowing beneath the prayer carpet. He extended his hands and filled his two fists with gold etc. and went to his mother who reproached him for bringing what is not liked by Allah. Upon this he realized his mistake and promised not to commit that sin in future.

He sincerely repented and went to the Khangah and threw himself at the feet of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, who welcomed him with blessings and initiated him into the Firdausi order.¹

He passed rest of his life there and compiled the letters and Malfuzat of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri under different titles.²

1. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.92-b. See also, S.H.Askari, JKBOPL, 1982, PP.1-26.

2. Maktubat-i-Sadi
Maktubat-i-Do-Sadi.
Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani,
Rahat-ul-Qulub.
Tohfa-e-Ghaibi, or
Bahf-ul-Ma'ani or
Kanz-ul-Ma'ani.

QAZI SHAMSUDDIN:

He was a great scholar and Qazi of Chausa. He was deeply impressed by the piety and mystic accomplishments of the Shaikh, and became his disciple.¹ As he held the post of the Qazi, he could not attend the assembly (Majlis) of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri very frequently. The Shaikh thought it better to teach and guide him through writings, as the latter made request.² The Shaikh had written about 98 letters to him dealing with various aspects of mystic discipline.³

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1. A later tradition says, that when the Qazi first met Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri he was very much disappointed and critical of the behaviour and some utterings of the Shaikh apparently violating the Shara. The Shaikh is reported to have apologised for his words and actions which were against the shara. He offended himself for legal action against him but the Qazi was so impressed by him that he became his disciple.
See- Ganj-i-Arshadi, Ms. pt.IV, f.113.
 2. "Brother, Shamsuddin may God bless you with the special blessing granted to the penitent. Many requests have come that something should be written on a variety of topics and that some warnings be given." This passage shows that the Qazi might have made several requests to the Shaikh for sending letters. See. Maktubat-i-Sadi. Letter 4.
 3. This collection of letters came to be known as Maktubat-i-Sadi (The hundred letters), out of which two letters like 8 and 9 are addressed to one of the senior disciples, Qazi Sadruddin. In letter 4 and 55, the Shaikh has considered the companionship of Qazi Sadruddin for Qazi Shamsuddin as precious; advised the latter to consult and remove the difficulties if any on the path of knowledge.
See; Maktubat-i-Sadi, letters 4 and 55.

MAULANA AMUN¹

Maulana Amun was one of the favourite disciples of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. One of his ancestors named Abdullah had migrated from Isfahan (Iran) to India and settled at Chausa (Shahabad District, Bihar). Maulana Amun claimed himself to be the sixth in descent from him.² His father Ibrahim came from Chausa and settled at Charwayan.³

He became the disciple of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. Whenever the Shaikh visited Sheikhpura via Charwayan in order to see his nephew Shah Shoaib, he used to stop at Charwayan and became the guest of Shaikh Ibrahim.

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1. Following is the genealogical table of Maulana Amun's ancestors given by him in his malfuzat:

Maulana Amun, b. Maulana Shah Ibrahim b. Shaikh Abdul Rahim, b. Abdul Rahman, b. Abdul Aziz, b. Israel, b. Abdullah Chausi, b. Abdul Wahid Haqqani, b. Abul Qasim, b. Abu Masood Isfahani, b. Abu Najib, b. Imam Abu Saeed, b. Imam Abul Wais, b. Imam Abul Lais, b. Imam Abu Ishaq, b. Imam Abu Zaid, b. Imam Abdullah, Ibn. Abbas, b. Abdul Mutlib, b. Abul Hashim, b. Abdul Mannaf, b. Qaste, b. Kulub. b. Marrah, b. Kaab, b. Lawi, b. Ghalib, b. Fahar, b. Balmak, b. Nazar, b. Kunnan.

See- Malfuz Mubarak or Tahqiqat-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Maj.I, ff.5-6.

2. Qeyamuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. p.155
3. The village was called after the name of Ibrahim as Ibrahimpur Charwayan, located in Barbiga near Sheikhpura in Monghyr District Bihar. (now modern Nalanda District). Qeyamuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. PP.155-6.

During his stay ^{there} he is reported to have blessed and enlightened¹ Shaikh Ibrahim's son Maulana Amun who later became the disciple and joined the company of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri.

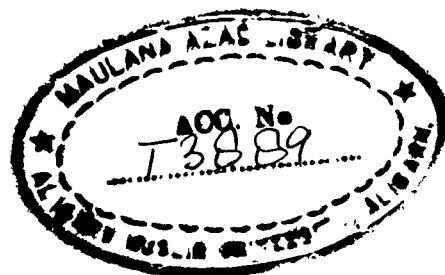
After some time the Governor of Bihar named Kamgar, Majd-ul-Mulk, offered some land for the maintenance of the family of Maulana Amun but the Maulana refused to accept it. But later, on the advice of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri he accepted that piece of land. Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri himself planted a tree of Gulchigan on the plot.²

But the Shaikh passed his later part of his life in seclusion. Before his death, he is reported to have told his

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1. It is said that once Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri asked for some food. When food was served to him he asked to Maulana Amun also to partake food along with him and offered half eaten loaf from his mouth to Maulana Amun which was taken by him without hesitation. As soon as he ate the food his heart was illuminated with the divine light and he diverted from worldly attachment. Thus, Maulana Amun became one of the great devotees of Shaikh Sharafuddin and always remained in the company of his pir in seclusion or in journey, for twelve years.

See- Muhammad Tayyab Abdali, Op.Cit. p.42.

2. Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj,10, PP.19-20.



disciples that he was going to leave the world, appointed his son as his spiritual successor (Sajjada nashin) and conferred on him the Khilafatnama and the turban (dastar) and died on Friday, 4 Shaban 784 A.H./ 1382 A.D.²

1. Rahat-ul-Qulub,

Maj. 10, pp.19-20.

2. Tahqiqat-ul-Ma'ani, Malfuzat of Maulana Amun contains the date of his death.

The grave of Maulana Amun is located in a four walled boundary, which is a place of worship by Hindu and Muslim, at Ibrahimpur Charwayan.

See- Qeyamuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. 155-6.

SHAH SHOAIB (1289¹- 1421 A.D.)

He was born in 688 A.D./1289 A.D., but lost his father Shaikh Jalal Maneri² in his childhood and therefore, his education was completed at Maner under the supervision of his grand father. In his youth he is reported to have developed intensive love for God. Occassionally he fell into mystic ecstacy and fled to jungles where he indulged in rigorous austerity and self mortification.

After sometime he became disciple of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri and settled at Sheikhpura. The Shaikh used to visit his nephew, Shah Shoaib and blessed him.³ He received the Khilafatnama granted by the Shaikh, and was entrusted to Shaikh Hasan Daim Balkhi who gave it to Shah Shoaib after the death of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri.

Shah Shoaib died in 824 A.D./1412 A.D. and was buried at Sheikhpura. His tomb is still believed to exist at Sheikhpura when an Urs is held.

1. This date is derived from the name 'Shah Shoaib' 688 A.H./ 1289 A.D.

2. He was the son of Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih. His mother's name was Malika Saida daughter of Ibrahim bin Ismail son of Imam Muhammad Taj Faqih.

The Tomb of Shaikh Jalal Maneri is located at Maner and is still pointed out in front of a tank and just near about the mausoleum of Shaikh Yahya Maneri (bari Dargah).

See- Hafiz Shamsuddin Ahmad, Op.Cit. p.137.

3. Tahqiqat-ul-Ma'ani Ms. Majlis, II.

SALAH MUKHLIS OR SALAHUDDIN MUKHLIS

He was the son of Asad-ul-Haq Daud Khan and the grandson of Malik Ibrahim Bayyu¹ (d. 1353 A.D.), the Governor of Bihar during the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughluq and Firuz Shah Tughlaq.

He became the disciple of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri and is reported to have constructed a mausoleum on the grave of the mother of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. When the Shaikh knew about it he was very much pleased with Salah Mukhlis due to his voluntary services and devotion and granted him his own turban (dastar). He has compiled one of the Malfuzat of his pir titled Munis-ul-Muridin.²

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1. According to local tradition, he had defeated Raja Hans Kumar of Rohtashgarh. The tomb is located on the summit of Bari Pahari or Pir Pahari, two miles North West of Bihar Sharif. The tomb of Malik Ibrahim Bayyu is still revered and worshipped by the local people, particularly by a trading community of Bihar-Sharif known as Mahoris. See, Muhammad Yasin Yunus, A History of the Maliks, 1927, PP.4-13; Qeyamuddin, Ahmad, Op.Cit. P.38; Dr. Desai, EIAPS, 1955-6, P.8; D.R. Patil, Op.Cit. PP.47-9; Maulavi Muhammad Hamid Kuraishi, Op.Cit. PP.57-8.
 2. This Malfuzat was completed in 775 A.H./1337-4, A.D. which has been published and translated into Urdu.

MAULANA MUZAFFAR SHAMS BALKHI

EARLY LIFE:

Maulana Burhanuddin Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, a remote descendant of Shaikh Ibrahim b. Adham,¹ was the eldest son of Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi who, it is said, was a prince of Balkh and had abdicated the throne, came to India and settled at Bihar-Sharif.²

But, a later source says he was in the service of the Sultan of Delhi. Later he left the royal service and took up a life of mendicant and came to Bihar in search of a spiritual master and became the disciple of Shaikh Ahmad Charamposh (d.³ 1374-5 A.D.) of Bihar Sharif, settled.

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1. Following is the genealogical table of the Maulana **Muzaffar** Shams Balkhi- b. Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi, b. Sayyid Ali, b. Hamiduddin, b. Sirajuddin, b. Sayyid Buzrug, b. Mahmud; b. Sultan Ibrahim; b. Yaqub; b. Ahmad; b. Ishaq; b. Zaid; b. Muhammed; b. Qasim; b. Ali Ashghar; b. Imam Zainul Abedien; b. Imam Hussain, b. Hazrat Ali.

see- Tahqiqat-ul-Ma'ani. Ms. Maj.1,

3. He was the maternal grandson of Shaikh Shihabuddin pir Jagjaut of Jethauli and cousin (maternal) of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. He was son of Musa Hamdani who claimed to be the descendant of Hazrat Imam Hussain. He became a disciple of Shaikh Alauddin Ala-ul-Haq⁹ Suhrawardi whose spiritual lineage came from Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi. He died most probably in 1364 A.D., whose tomb is located to the East of a plain area, called Logani, which is famous as Ambar Dargah, in Bihar-Sharif.

R.R.Diwakar, Op.Cit. p.453;

Qeyamuddin Ahmad Op.Cit. PP.396-9.

there and invited his family from Delhi to come over to Bihar-Sharif.¹

His family members preferred ascetic life, abandoned the wordly pleasures, leaving behind all valuable and precious mundane paraphernalias at Delhi they came to Bihar.

On reaching Bihar-Sharif, Sultan Mu'iz became the disciple of Shaikh Ahmad Charamposh but Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi joined the company of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. He was very much impressed by his learning and piety and ultimately became his disciple.² But the Shaikh instructed him to reacquire knowledge of the formal sciences (Shari'at), which is essential for adopting the mystic path (Tarikat). He further pointed out that whatever he had learnt earlier was with the aim of acquiring fame and worldly gains. He then should devote himself to his studies with sincerity and not with wordly gains. He then proceeded to Delhi.³

On reaching Delhi, he became teacher in the college (Kushak) built by Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-88 A.D.).

1. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms, f.151;
Monis-ul-Qulub, Maj.33, f.185.

2. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. ff.36-7;
Gauharistan, Ms. f.66-a.

3. In a letter addressed to one of his friends, Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi wrote, It is about five months that I came here and have occupied a place in old Delhi (Delhi-i-Kuhna) under the conviction and in expectation of pursuing the path of the mendicants". see, Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Balkhi, L-132.

Drawing a handsome salary of 5000 tankas,¹ he is reported to have worked for two years.

One day he was attending audition party (Sama'), the musicians sang some verses which made such a tremendous effect on him that he fell in ecstasy and in that condition he fell down on ground from the building and as it is reported remained unhurt, after that he gave up the job and all his belongings and returned to Bihar-Sharif, joined the company of his pir (Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri), where he adopted the mystic discipline.²

He married a number of women but divorced them and retained only a concubine named, Bibi Zia, at her earnest appeal.³

After the death of his pir he carried out the mission of his Shaikh and effectively organized his silsilah, made a number of disciples,⁴ trained them through his

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1. The figure however seems to be rather exaggerated, it is not clear whether the amount was paid per month or annum. see, Monis-ul-Qulub, Ms. f.85.
 2. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.38.
 3. Monis-ul-Qulub, Ms. Maj.78, f.408.
 4. Among his chief disciples (1) Maulana Qamaruddin Balkhi his younger brother. (2) Shaikh Jamal Auliya Audhi, whose grave is located at Bihar-Sharif near the tomb of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri. (3) Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Balkhi are prominent.

letters¹ and popularized the principles and teachings of Firdausi order.

He performed several pilgrimage to Mecca and reported to have died at Aden, while on his way to India after performing last pilgrimage.

SHAIKH HUSSAIN MU'IZ BALKHI (d.1440 A.D.)

He was the son of Shaikh Mu'iz Balkhi. He was born at Zafarabad and was brought to Bihar Sharif by his parents. He was looked-after³ and trained by his uncle (Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi) who had brought him to the Khanqah of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri at his early age. Thus, he had been brought up and trained in the Khanqah atmosphere.⁴

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1. Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Collection of 181 letters addressed to various disciples and friends, whereas, letters 148-154, 163, 166, 169, 179 are mainly addressed to Sultan Ghiyasuddin of Bengal. For detail see S.H. Askari, JBRs, 1956, Vol.XLII, Pt. II, PP.188-193.
Maulana Saiyid Abdul Rauf, Maa, 1958, Vol.LXXXII, No.6, PP.440-456.

Besides this collection of letters, Maulana is said to have left several other writings like

- 1) Diwan Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi, (Print).
- 2) Sharah Aqaid Nasfi-wa-Aqaid Muzaffari.
- 3) Risala Muzaffariya dar Hidayat Darwesh.

2. A place near Jaunpur in the province of modern U.P.
3. When the family (members) of Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi was proceeding from Delhi to Bihar Sharif it stayed for sometime at Zafarabad. It was during this sojourn at Zafarabad that a son was born to Shaikh Mu'iz Balkhi. Before the news of his birth could reach Bihar Sharif, Shaikh Sharafuddin had already informed Maulana about his birth and called him as the son of Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi. See, Monis-ul-Qulub, p.408.
4. Ibid, Maj. 52, f.268.

Some of the incidents of his childhood indicate that Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri had foreseen a great mystic in him. He is reported to have remarked that Shaikh Hussain would inherit and enjoy their fruits of the hard struggle or endeavour of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri and Shaikh Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi without himself working hard.¹

When he grew up started learning the lessons of Awarif-ul-Ma'arif under the supervision of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri but completed the book under the guidance of Shah Badiuddin Madar at Jaunpur who conferred the title of Samandar-e-Tauhid on Shaikh Hussain Balkhi.²

Besides acquiring mystic knowledge he had studied different branches of theology also. During his four years stay at Mecca he had learnt the art of reciting the Holy Qur'an (Qirat) from Shaikh Shamsuddin Halwai, the greatest authority on the subject at that time. He had thoroughly studied the Sahi Bukhari³ and Sahi Muslim⁴ under the supervision of his father. He had studied several books on jurisprudence also under the guidance

1. Monis-ul-Qulub, Ms. Maj.52, f.267.

2. Mir'at-ul-Asrar, Ms. f.367-a;
Bauharistan, Ms. f.47, a.

3. The title of the first of the Autubu's Sittah, or 'Six correct' books of traditions received by the Sunnis. It was compiled by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail al Bukhari (d.254/868 AD). It contains 9, 882 traditions, of which 2,623 are held to be of undisputed authority. They are arranged into 160 books and 3450 chapters.
Thomas Patrick Hughes, Op.Cit. P.555.

4. The title of the second of the Kutub's Sittah, or 'Six correct' books of the traditions received by the Sunnis. It was compiled by Abu'l Hussain Muslim ibn al-Hallaj al-Qushayri (d.261/874 AD). The collection contains 7,275 traditions, of which it is said, 4000 are of undisputed authority.

of the renowned scholars of Mecca.¹

As he had been associated with his uncle for about 40 years he received the Khilafatnama from both his uncle and Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri.²

After the death of his uncle at Aden he returned to Bihar-Sharif and settled there.³ As he was an accomplished scholar also he wrote several books and treatises on various subjects including.

Hazrat Khams in Arabic

Risala Qaza o Qadr

Risala Tauhid Khas

Risala Tauhid ul Khas ul Khawas

Risala dar bayan e Hasht Chiz.

Risala Zikr

Aurad dar fasli

Ganj-i-la-Yakhfa

Maktubat

Ijazat Nama in the name of his son

Hasan Daim Jashan Balkhi

Diwan Farsi

Mathnawi Zad al Musafir

Risala dar Shamail wa Khasail Nabwi

Mathnawi chehar Darwesh

He died in 844⁴ A.H./1440-1 A.D. and was buried at Paharpura (Bihar-Sharif).

1. Mir'at-ul-Asrar Ms. f.357-b.

2. This date of death is derived from the following chronogram.

سال وفات شه بلخی حسین * شد گل باب بهار شرف
See, Muhammad Tayyab Abdali, Op.Cit. P.106.
Moinuddin Dardai, Op.Cit. P.304.

He left several disciples and Khalifas who established Firdausi Khānqahs in different regions of Bihar, for instance.¹

Shaikh Musa Banarsi (d.1464-5. A.D.)

Qutubuddin Binai Jaunpuri

Saifuddin Balkhi

Shaikh Sulaiman Balkhi

Shaikh Bahram Bihari²

Alam Maneri

SHAIKH HASAN DAIM JASHAN BALKHI (d.1451 A.D.)

But the Chief Khalifa (successor) of Shaikh Hussain Balkhi was his own son Shaikh Hasan. He was, like his father, great sufi as well as an accomplished scholar. He wrote a commentary on Hazrat Khams³ and other books like Latif u'l Ma'ani; Risalah Qaza o Qadr; Risala dar bayan hasht cheez etc.

He was extremely generous and distributed immediately whatever was offered to him.⁴ He died in 1451 A.D. and is buried at Bihar.Sharif.⁵

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1. For detail information about life and activities of Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Balkhi see, Monis ul Qulub; Mohammad Tayyab Abdali, Op.Cit. PP.100-8; Maulana Saiyid Abdul Rauf, Maa. 1956, Jan - July, No.3, Vol.LXXVII, PP.211-221, No.4, PP.277-84.
 2. He is reported to have compiled Risala (treaty) which is famous as Risala Bahram Bihari.
 3. This book came to be known as Kashf al Asrar written in Persian. It contains discussion on the topics like reality of knowledge and mystical knowledge.
 4. Monis u'l Qulub, Maj. 50 f.112.
 5. Ibid. maj.69, f.350.

SHAIKH AHMAD LANGAR DARYA BALKHI (d.1486 .A.D)

Shaikh Hasan Balkhi was succeeded by his son Shaikh Ahmad Langar Darya Balkhi Firdausi. He is reported to have completed his education under the supervision of his grand father Shaikh Hussain Naqsha Tauhid Balkhi, who taught him the book Aqaid Nasfi ma Sharah Muzaffari.¹ Shaikh Ahmad Langar Darya is famous for his Malfuzat. Monis u'l Qulub.²

SHAIKH IBRAHIM BALKHI (d.1508 A.D.)

It was Shaikh Ibrahim Balkhi, son of Shaikh Ahmad Langar Darya, whose sons settled at Maner and Shaikhpora, whereas Shaikh Hafiz Darwesh Balhi succeeded as a Khalifa (successor) to his father at Bihar-Sharif.³

But, later conflict arose between the care takers of the mausoleum of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri and Shaikh Hafiz Balkhi, the then Sajjadanashin of Khanqah of Bihar-Sharif. Consequently, one of the remote descendants of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri named, Shah Beekh from Sunhara Pallasy was installed as Sajjadanashin at Bihar Sharif Khanqah. And the descendants of Shaikh Hafiz Balkhi migrated to Fatuha near Patna.

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1. It was recorded by Qazi Saiyid bin Khitab Bihari, contains 100 assemblies.
 2. Muhammad Tayyab Abdali, Op.Cit. p.116.
 3. Ibid. pp.120-1.

Thus, the Balkhis in later period established their centres at Maner, Shaikhpura, Fatuha,¹ Islampur² where they contributed to preach the teachings of Firdausi order throughout Bihar.

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1. A village in the Barh Subdivision, at the junction of the Ganges and Punpun, seven miles east of Patna.

L.S.S.O 'Malley, BODG, Patna. 1924, P.208.

2. A village in the extreme South West of the Bihar Subdivision, situated 14 miles south of Hilsa, and about 10 miles to north and a little east of Nadera.

L.S.S.O' Malley, BODG, Patna, P.213;

A.S.D. Beglar, A.S.I, 1872-3, Vol.VIII, P.196.

CHAPTER-III

FIRDAUSI IDEOLOGY, INSTITUTIONS AND IMPACT

(A) TEACHINGS:

In order to understand the mystic ideology, teachings and practices of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al-Maneri and other saints of this order (Silsilah) let us have first understand Shaikh's concept of tasawwuf or mysticism and see what mystic system he had inherited and how he explained and interpreted the whole material? What appears from his letters is that his approach was quite different from that of others.

Almost all the writers on mysticism have held and tried to prove that Sufiism originated with Prophet of Islam and that all the Sufis have inherited the mystic trend and ideology from the Prophet and his Companions.¹

But, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri asserts that Sufiism is as old as man himself. He, probably, for the first time adopts Adam as a model and derives some of the basic concepts and practices of Sufiism from the life of Adam. In one of his letters² to his disciple Qazi Shamsuddin of Chausa, he explains that Sufiism is deeply rooted in the past and it had been the mode of life of the Prophets and the faithful and the just (Siddigin). He then proceeds to derive certain Sufi practices

1. As already discussed about the 'Origin and development of Sufiism in Chapter, I, pp.

2. Maktubat-i-Sadi, L-22, hereafter cited as M. Sadi.

from the life of Adam, the first Sufi in the world, for instance, the 40 days retreat (chillah) was first observed by Adam; when he committed sin (ma'siyat), he repented (tauba), a tradition inherited by all the Sufis, he was then commanded by Allah to wander (safar) in the world in order to purify himself, also a practice observed by all the Sufis; When exonerated from his sin he put on patched garment (muragga) made from the leaves of the trees of paradise which he later conferred on his son Prophet Shith, a practice later followed by the Prophet of Islam also, who passed on the spiritual wealth to his descendants and followers. Similarly the Kaaba, built by Hazrat Adam, was the first sanctuary or Khangah, which later served as a model for the Sufis to build a sanctuary where they could assemble and devote themselves to the worship of Allah and seek union (wasal) with Him.

Thus, the mystic discipline concludes the Shaikh, originated with Adam and was completed by the Prophet of Islam.¹

With this background the Shaikh classified the Sufis into three categories:-

1. The Sufis
2. Mutasawwif
3. Mutashabbih

1. See, M. Sadi, L-22.

SUFI:

The Sufi, according to Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, is one who has annihilated his self, exists with the Truth, has liberated himself from the hold of natural instincts and has attained Union with the Truth.¹

The Mutasawwif is one who has annihilated his-self and is in search of the next stage (existence and union with the Truth), and with this object tries to follow the Sufis. (of the first category) by means of austerities.²

The Mutashabbih (dissemblers or imitators) are those who for the sake of worldly gain assume the appearance of these two (the Sufis and Mutasawwif), without having any idea of their qualities and status. In spite of their hypocrisy it may be hoped that their resemblance and association with the true Sufis they would become sincere and achieve their goal.³

Thus, a real Sufi, according to the Shaikh is, One who wholeheartedly devotes himself to the worship of God Almighty, observes Shara (Law) and adores Him neither due to

1. صوفی آن بود که از خود فانی شده باشد و بحق باقی گشته و از

قبضه طبايع رسته و بحقیقت حقائق پیوسته - See M.Sadi, L. 22;

Sharh-i-Adab-ul-Muridin, Vol.I, p.83.

2. The same passage has been mentioned with slight variations in the beginning of the sentence. See, Sharh-i-Adab-ul-Muridin, Vol.I.pp.83-4;

M.Sadi, 22.

3. Ibid, L.22.

fear of punishment nor with the hope of paradise but seeks Him alone, thus, constantly enjoys His nearness and favours.¹

According to Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, the main object of a Sufi is to achieve union with the Ultimate Reality.²

But this union does not mean that one is merged in the Lord like the joining or merging of two matters or substances (Jauhar). It simply means that one is completely cut off from everything other than the Lord and is completely absorbed in his devotion to the Lord. The more one is separated and is away from the material world the more he approaches and comes closer to the Almighty.³

1. For references see:

M.Sadi, L-1;

Ibid, L.8;

Ibid, L.34;

Ibid, L.91; Sharh Adab-ul-Muridin, pp.125-6.

2. In support of this view the Shaikh quotes the saying of Haritha (One of the companions of the Prophet) that he was seen the throne of the Lord, meaning that he was completely unaware of the rest of the world.

He further cites another example from the behaviour of Abdullah ibn Umar, who while engaged in circumambulation (tawaf) did not return the compliment of some one. He was reproached for violating the law (Shari'at). Explaining the situation Abdullah Ibn Umar told him that as he was absorbed in vision of the Almighty he could not listen to his compliments.

From this the Shaikh concludes that when one completely devotes to the Lord he is completely cut off from the whole world and is absorbed in the vision. He feels the presence of the Lord of the Universe. See, M.Sadi, L-15.

In order to attain the stage of spiritual perfection one has to adopt the prescribed path which, the Shaikh describes in the following manner:

Man is composed of three elements;

Soul (nafs), heart (dil) and spirit (ruh).

The path of Law (Shari'at) is prescribed for and regulates the soul (nafs), the discipline of Tariqat guides the heart, and the Haqiqat is meant for the guidance of the spirit (ruh). The devotee, in order to achieve Ultimate goal, has to adopt the above mentioned three mystic disciplines, Shari'at, Tariqat and Haqiqat.¹

LAW (SHARI'AT):

The word Shari'at literally means 'the wide road' or 'the Highway'. Technically it means, "The collection of commands and prohibitions revealed by the Almighty through His Prophets, according to the conditions and exigencies of the people."²

1. M.Sadi, L.57.

2. The Shaikh has discussed at length the meaning of Shari'at in number of letters addressed to his disciples.

M.Sadi, L.23;

Ibid, L.25;

Ibid, L.56;

Ibid, L.57;

Monis ul Muridin, Ms, Maj.13,f.26.

In its specific sense the Shari'at means the comprehensive Divine law contained in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah and the detailed principles derived from these two sources and codified by the learned doctors of the Muslim law.

The first task of one who intends to follow the mystic path, repeatedly asserts the Shaikh, is to follow the Law (Shari'at).¹

A devotee cannot attain spiritual accomplishment and cannot achieve his goal unless he strictly observes and sincerely adheres to the Law.²

The knowledge of divine path is essential for a safe and successful journey. It is the Law (Shari'at) which guides the traveller and reveals the secrets and dangers of the path. Acquisition of knowledge³ is the basis of obedience devotion, worship, austerities and selfmortification. The traveller (salik

1. M.Sadi, L.56.

2. Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, L.179.

3. According to Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, knowledge is of two types (1) کسی (2) غیرکسی

The first type of knowledge is gained from teachers, or through the study of books.

The second type of knowledge is that which wells up within the breast of a man, and that also is of two types (a) infused into the hearts of prophets from the divine bounty (Wahi) revelation. (b) infused into the hearts of Saint through inspiration (ilham) see.

M.Sadi, L.55;

Mukh-Ul-Ma'ani, Maj.14, p.25.

who has no knowledge of the path is bound to be misled by the Satan and shall never reach the goal.¹

Again it is the knowledge of the Law which helps in character building and adopting noble qualities like simplicity in life, politeness, love for all, generosity and magnanimity.²

As food and water are necessary for life and health, argues the Shaikh, so are the noble qualities for a traveller; as a sick man cannot be cured without proper treatment so a devotee cannot traverse the path without the purification of the soul.³

Both these processes, asserts the Shaikh, are not possible without the knowledge of Shara.

The Shaikh has severely criticised the views and condemned the behaviour of those who undermine the importance of Shara on the pretext that the aim of observing Shara is to get rid of sins, as they have given up sins and attained the perfection. They also wrongly believe that God does not need one's devotion hence there is no need of observing the Shara (Law).⁴

1. M.Sadi, L.23.

2. Ibid, L.59.

3. Ibid, L.18.

4. Ibid. L.17.

According to the Shaikh such people have fallen into the trap of the Satan. He further points out that all those who are well versed in the Law, and all the true Sufis who have attained the degree of perfection know that each restriction of the Law has some Divine secret and is ultimately a blessing for the devotee.¹

WAY (TARIQAT):

The next and higher stage in the mystic discipline, according to the Shaikh, is Tariqat which stems from the Shara. The latter deals with divine unity (tauhid), purity (taharat), prayer (salah), fasting (saum), pilgrimage (haj), Holy war (jihad), alms (zakat), and also other obligation, while the Tariqat is to seek the reality behind all these prescribed things. In other words, everything that is connected with outward purity pertains to the Law, while everything connected with inner purification and sanctification pertains to the Tariqat.²

For instance, to wash ^{the} clothes so that one may offer prayer is the command of Law. Whereas, to clean one's heart from human instincts is the command of Tariqat. To perform ablution (waju) in order to offer prayer is the command of the Shari'at and to remain perpetually with ablution is the command of Tariqat.

1. M.Sadi, L. 17.

2. Ibid, L. 25.

The Law prescribes that at the time of prayer one should turn his face towards the Kaaba, while the Tarigat endeavours to turn his face towards the Truth. In general, the observance of all that pertains to the senses comes under the orbit of the Law, while the Tarigat deals with the inner purity.¹

The path of Shari'at, explains the Shaikh, is rather simple and easy to follow; but the Tarigat is a higher discipline and more difficult to follow, hence is meant for the elect. Therefore, anyone who adopts the path of Tarigat (Way) ceases to belong to the class of the common people and joins the class of the elect.²

TRUTH (HAQIQAT):

The next and the final stage in mystic discipline is the path of Reality or Truth (Haqiqat). The Shara pertains to the actions of the devotee and refers to the commands and prohibitions which regulate the external aspect of the life of the devotee, while the Truth (Haqiqat) pertains to the knowledge (ma'rifat) of the Lord.³ Thus, ma'rifat or gnosis, according to the Shaikh, is the essence of the faith. From the knowledge of the Creator the knower attains salvation everlasting life.⁴

1. M.Sadi, L-25.

2. Ibid, L-25.

3. Ibid, L-26.

4. Ibid, L-45.

Knowledge of God means that one should consider each and every creation of God as weak, helpless and fully in the hands of the Lord. He should sever all his relations with the creatures firmly believing that there is only One God, eternal in both His essence and His attributes.¹

It is a mystical stage which is purely a divine gift granted to the devotee by the Lord when he sincerely observes the commands of the Shara. The Shaikh has compared the Shari'at with the matter and the body, and the Hagiqat with the Reality, essence and the spirit (ruh); the former can be acquired by observing the Law while the latter is purely a divine blessing and gift conferred on the seeker by the Lord.²

The divine knowledge, the Shaikh explains, is based on three pillars; Firstly, knowledge of the Lord with the negation of likeness to Him; secondly, the knowledge of His attributes with His commands; and thirdly, the knowledge of His deeds and the mystery and wisdom (hikmat) behind them.³ When one acquires

1. M.Sadi, L-45.

2. In this passage the Shaikh has clearly distinguished the meaning and character in between Law and Truth. "It should be known that the Truth has to be interpreted to mean that there can be no annulment with respect to it. From the time of Adam till the end of the world, the command concerning the mystical knowledge of God remains the same. Yet in the Law there is scope for annulment and change. This presents no difficulty, for the Law deals with explicit commands. There was a time when there was no Law, and there will be another time when Law will be no more, but there never was, nor could there ever be, a time without the Truth! "

M.Sadi, Eng. Tran. Paul Jackson. L-26. see also Monis-ul-Muridin, Ms. Maj-13, f.26.

3. M.Sadi, L-26.

the knowledge of the Law, struggles and performs austerities and acts with sincerity and purity of heart he is blessed with the Divine knowledge, that is ilm-e-Haqiqat.

The Shaikh has made it clear that both Law and the Truth are interlinked and inseparable. One cannot reach the stage of Haqiqat without observing the Law.¹

SPIRITUAL MASTER:

One cannot reach his goal unless he has an urge (irada) for the goal. Similarly a devotee cannot attain union with the Lord unless he has an inner urge and desire for the union.² This desire, according to the Shaikh, cannot be created by anyone except the Lord Himself for 'God guides whomsoever He wishes' (Q.42.52)³. Thus, the urge for union is a divine grace and gift conferred by the Lord on whomsoever He wishes, and for which one does not need any other external guidance.⁴

Therefore, in the beginning there is no need of a guide or pir but it becomes inevitable for a devotee to find a proper guide when the desire of mystical union with the Lord is illuminated in his heart which compels him to seek and find the path leading to his goal.⁵ It is at this stage that one needs proper guidance and association with the righteous one.⁶ This

1. M.Sadi, L-28.

2. Ibid, L-7

3. Ibid, L-5, and 13.

4. Ibid, L-5,

5. Ibid, L-5.

6. This view has been attested by the Qur'anic ayat "O ! Ye who believe '. Be careful of your duty to Allah, and be with the righteous (Sadegeen)" Q.IX:115.

function had always been performed by the messengers of Allah¹ and after them assigned to their successors (Khalifas). The Prophet of Islam is reported to have remarked that 'the learned ones of his community are the spiritual successors of the prophets and are like the prophets of the Israelites.' He is further reported to have instructed his community to follow his successors meaning the orthodox caliphs and his close companions and the 'Ulama².

Moreover, just as people need a Prophet, a child a nurse, a sick man a physician, a thirsty person water and a hungry one bread; concludes the Shaikh, so too a novice needs a compassionate guide.³

The Shaikh has further discussed and elaborated the point with the help of a number of illustrations. For instance, the road to the Ka'aba is visible and well known but one cannot reach it without the help of an experienced guide.⁴ As the

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1. "And thus have we inspired in thee (Muhammed) a Spirit of Our command. Thou knewest not what the scripture was, nor what the Faith. But We have made it a light whereby We guide whom We will of Our bondmen. And lo! thou verily dost guide unto a right path" (Q.XLII:52)
 2. M.Sadi, L-5;
Maqhz-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. f.23 a;
Malfuz u's Safar, Ms.f.3.
 3. M.Sadi, L-7.
 4. Ibid - L.5.

ordinary roads in this material world are infested with thieves and robbers, so in the mystic Path, is infested with one's ego, devils, men and jinn. As one cannot travel along the worldly road without an escort so on the mystic path one cannot travel safely without an experienced, holy man as one's escort.¹

Besides one can be plagued with external misfortunes and dangers. Many a philosopher and worldly minded people who lacked faith, piety, and sense of morality and relied upon their own intellectual powers ultimately became followers of their own base desires and entered the wilderness where they fell and perished, losing even their faith.

But the blessed ones, protected and guided by the qualified Shaikhs have overcome the hidden dangers and have reached their destination safely.

Even after reaching this stage one needs proper guidance for many a traveller who managed to avoid misfortunes and passed successfully through various trials have at last succumbed to lassitude! At this stage if his guide possesses supernatural powers he will be able to protect and save the novice from falling into the ditch of misfortune.²

1. M.Sadi, L-5.

2. Ibid, L-5.

Further, in the course of his journey a novice might face various types of mystical tensions and experiences, some of which might be Satanic, others might be produced by his own ego, still others could come from the Merciful Lord Himself. All these situations would be new to the novice and he might not discern the source of these spiritual experiences. Here he needs the help of one who is expert in discerning such experiences.¹

Another argument infavour of and justification for having a spiritual guide put forward by the Shaikh is that one who wants to have an interview with the King seeks the help of a favourite courtier of the King. If his case is recommended by one of the favourites of the King he achieves his object easily, otherwise he might wait for a long time to achieve his aim. Similarly, inorder to receive Divine favour one has to make contact with one close to the Lord who might recommend his case to the Lord.²

Thus, it is clear from the above discussions of the Shaikh that an ardent devotee cannot reach the goal with out the help of a competent and experienced guide. The Shaikh has described in detail the qualification of a guide.

1. M. Sadi, L-5.

2. Ibid, L-5.

He should be well versed in all the mystic stages i.e. Shari'at, Tariqat, Haqiqat and Ma'arifat. He should have passed through ups and downs of the mystic path. He should have close and intimate contact with the Almighty¹ God and firmly established in his spiritual state. He should have tasted the horrors of God's majesty and sweetness of His beauty. He should have attained enlightenment and become the embodiment of a perfect spiritual physician.² Thus, he should be easily recognized, well known and respected by great Shaikhs.

In short, a perfect Shaikh should be an embodiment of piety, experienced and universally respected, free from selfish

1. As has been said "The Saints dwell under My domes.

Except for Me, no one can recognize them"

M. Sadi, L-6;

Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XX , f.94a;

Fawa'id Rukni, p.52.

2. The Shaikh says, "Man is composed of two different substances (1) Heavenly (2) Earthly. Just as this earthly body is susceptible to disease so too is the heavenly one. Just as, there are physicians for the earthly body who, by means of their treatment, change a sick person into a healthy one and save people from the danger of death, so too there are physicians for the heavenly nature who, by means of their treatment, understand and distinguish illness, causes, and connected experiences, leading the sick person from the house of destruction to the house of salvation. See. M.Sadi, L-19; Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XXXXI, ff.182 b - 183 a-b.

desires but at the same time he should not be an ecstatic (majzub)¹, a pretender (muddai) or proud person.²

SEARCH OF AND RELATION WITH THE PIR

When the desire for a Shaikh develops in the heart of a novice observes the Shaikh, he loses peace of mind and impatiently tries to find out a perfect and qualified Shaikh.³ Although it is a very difficult task to select a righteous and perfect Pir, however, when a novice perceives in his own heart the beauty of a certain Shaikh, he at once falls in love with the beauty of that saint and his saintliness (Wilayat).⁴

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1. Ecstatics, according to the Shaikh, are those filled with a tremendous longing for God; they have attained this stage under the compelling impulse of their zeal. They have passed beyond all other stages, but not much insight has been given to them. They are unaware of the various states of this way; they have no knowledge of the various stages, nor do they grasp the dangers that could occur along the Way; they cannot distinguish between goodness and wickedness, nor can they discern what is beneficial from what is harmful. Such men are unfit to become Shaikhs.
M.Sadi, Eng. Trans.
Paul Jackson, L-16.
 2. M.Sadi, L-6;
Ibid, L-16 and L-17.
 3. The Shaikh warned his disciples not to tread the Path of mysticism alone, and has quoted the saying of the Shaikhs, That, "Whoever has no spiritual guide has no religion" (M.Sadi, L-56.). Moreover, If you travel the Way without benefit of any intermediary, the Shaikh admonishes his disciples, you will fall headlong from the Way into a pit! Follow a spiritual guide so that, by his bounty, sooner or later you may reach the realm of the King. See. Ibid, L-14.
 4. Ibid, L-6.

When a novice comes into contact with such a saint and is satisfied with his qualities, he should formally request the Shaikh to initiate him into the mystic discipline for which the common practice is the preformance of bai'at i.e. taking oath of allegiance by placing one's hand in the hands of the Shaikh without which the practice of baiat will not be complete and acceptable.¹

After this, the novice goes through certain formalities, for instance, shaving the head with the scissors by the pir.²

1. Here the Shaikh has cited an example of Shaikh Ahmad Amun who presented himself before Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and made request for a cap which was granted by the Shaikh. After his (Shaikh Nizamuddin) death Shaikh Amun asked Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Delhi to accept him as his disciple. The Shaikh asked, whether he has been enrolled into the discipleship of any order? Shaikh Ahmad Amun replied, 'I have already received a cap from Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Upon this, Shaikh Nasiruddin said, there is no need of bai'at because receiving cap is a sign of discipleship. But some Sufis present in the assembly, started criticising this decision. At last, it was decided that 'cap' is a sign of gift (tabarruk) while for bai'at a novice has to give his hand in allegiance in the hands of a Shaikh. See Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. 19, f.89-a-b.

Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj.2, p.5.

2. In this connection he relates an interesting story rather a legend about Adam. His son Shith used to prefer isolation and seclusion. Adam was anxious about his condition. Angel Jibrael came and told Adam that his son was a Sufi. The angel offered a pair of Scissors to Shith to use it around the head of persons, who would come into contact with him. Thus, according to the Shaikh, this is the tradition in connection with the use of scissors for disciples. See. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. XIX, f.91,a-b.; Maghz-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Maj.17,f.11,a.

These two customs bai'at and shaving the head, points out the Shaikh, were not prevailing during the time of the Prophet, but originated during the later period.

It is reported that Khwaja Junaid of Baghdad was the first saint to introduce the system of bai'at emphasising that unless a disciple does not place his hand upon the hands of a spiritual master (Shaikh) the tradition of bai'at will not be acceptable.

Defending Khwaja Junaid (for introducing the system of Bai'at), the Shaikh says, that he must have derived the practice from the Sunnah of the Prophet.¹

REPENTANCE (TAUBA):

After these formalities begins the training of the novice. The first step for him, recommended by the Shaikh, is sincere repentance (tauba nasuh).²

Literally, the word 'tauba' means 'turning back' but according to the Shaikh, there are many ways of turning back which vary on the basis of one's stages, actions and the stations.³

1. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XIX, f.89b;
Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj,2, p.5.

2. M. Sadi, L-88.

3. Ibid, L-2.

Ordinary people, out of fear of punishment, turn from oppressive behaviour to being sorry. The elect ones turn away from their evil deeds because they have become cognizant of their obligation to revere their Master.

The elect of the elect, perceiving the insignificance and instability of all creatures and, indeed, their nothingness into light of the glory of the Maker, are able to turn away from all that is not God.

The infidels should repent for their infidelity and become true believers; sinners should turn aside from their sins and it becomes obligatory for them to devote their life in observance of God's Commands. Those already doing good should progress from what is good to what is better; those standing still should not linger in the courtyard but come straight up to His door; while those immersed in the affairs of the world should not sink lower into them, but rise to the pinnacle of detachment.¹

It is due to all these reasons that the Prophet of Islam used to repent seventy times every day, although, Allah had forgiven all his sins.²

1. M.Sadi, L-2.

2. Fawa'id Rukhi, p.11.

M.Sadi, L-2.

The Shaikh, therefore, warns his novice not to fail for a single moment in the task of renewing his penitence for sin and maintain a high resolve in this task for it is Almighty God who helps a man to achieve genuine repentance.¹

Moreover, he says that remaining undefiled by any sin, from creation till the resurrection is the work of angels. Remaining forever steeped in sin and rebellion is the lot of Satan. Turning back from sin to the path of devotion, by means of repentance and sorrow, is the task of Adam and men. Whenever some fault is forgiven through repentance, the relationship between him and Adam is cemented, but whoever persists in sin till the end of his life and does not repent links himself to Satan.²

1. M. Sadi, L-4.

2. Ibid, L.88;
Fawaid Rukni, P.11.

RECONCILIATION AND ADJUSTMENT OF RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE:

The next important step recommended by the Shaikh is that the novice should reconcile and adjust his relations with the people, He should seek forgiveness from and appease those against whom he might have done injustice.

For instance, he should return anything illegally obtained to its rightful owner. If he is not in a position to return his goods he should ask the owner to forgive him. If he is dead he should do some deeds of charity for the welfare of his soul. If he cannot do this he should perform other good deeds, seeking pardon for him. He should turn his heart to the Lord pleading for help so that He out of His bountiful generosity, might be pleased with him on the Day of Resurrection . and the one against whom he had sinned might become his friend on the Day of Resurrection.¹

If he is involved in backbiting, blaming or troubling others in various ways, it is necessary for him to admit his sins before the person concerned and seek his forgiveness.

With respect to the treatment of women and slave girls, it is not opportune to ask for forgiveness publicly, but one must turn towards God' for His mercy and grace.

1. M. Sadi, L-3.

If he has misled someone in matter of faith he must first of all accuse himself of having lied and ask forgiveness from the person whom he has misled, if this is possible, otherwise, turn back to God Almighty and plead with Him continuously until God Himself fills that person with happiness.

Thus, the Shaikh emphasises the point that one must make peace with the people first then proceed further.¹

UNITY OF GOD (TAUHID):

The basic principle of Islam as well as of Sufiism is the faith in the Oneness of God (tauhid) i.e. "There is no God but Allah", without firm faith in monotheism, emphasises the Shaikh, all good deeds and religious exercises become irrelevant and fruitless. Therefore, the whole concept of Islam becomes irrelevant for one who accepts and observes the commands and prohibitions enumerated in Sharī'at (Law), but denies Unity of God.

He, therefore, exhorts the novice to cultivate and develop in his heart firm faith for unity of God.²

In this connection he classifies faith into four grades or stages on the basis of the sayings of the followers of the path (Ahl-e-Tariqat).³

1. M.Sadi, L-3.

2. Ibid, L-44.

3. Ibid, L-1.

The first category come the hypocrites (munafiqin), who proclaim, "There is no god but Allah", but their heart is devoid of faith. This type of faith will prove useless in the next life (Akhirat).

The second type of faith is that when a person proclaims by tongue and believes in his heart that, "There is no god but Allah". This type of faith again is divided into two categories:

- I) Conventional, like the common people's faith and the
- II) Faith held by the learned (mutakallim), supported by rational proofs.¹

According to the Sufis, says the Shaikh, such kind of faith prevents people from falling into open polytheism² (Shirk Jali) and saves them from entering into hell and paves the way for the paradise. Although this type of belief is more beneficial and enduring than the first one, there is still an element of instability in it.

The third type of faith is the product of some sort of a Divine light (noor) . In this case a person's heart is illuminated with the Divine light to such an extent that he is

1. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.II, f.10, a-b.

2. According to the Shaikh, it means association with or desire for anything other than God, or to see either loss or profit coming from anything besides God.

For details see, M.Sadi, L-44;

Ibid- L-67;

Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.II, f.13, a-b.

able to perceive that every action is flowing from a single source i.e. from Allah. This firm belief is quite different from the faith of the common people (aamī) and the faith of the learned.

The Shaikh further illustrates the point: A person who on the basis of some one's report believes that a certain gentleman is in an inn (sarai) is like the one who has conventional faith inherited from his forefathers. Another person who, upon seeing the gentleman's horse and servants at the door of the inn, infers that the owner himself must be inside. His connection is like that of a learned one. But the man who actually sees the gentleman in the inn is like a believer who has reached the higher stage. He is a Sufi (arif), who in this stage sees creatures and the Creator clearly and perceives that they all come from Him.¹

The fourth stage is a mystic vision and experience in which a dazzling divine light becomes manifest to the devotee with such intensity that all the existing particles that lie within his vision become concealed in the very lustre of that light just as particles in the air are lost to sight on account of the brightness of the light emanating from the sun. This occurs not because the particles have ceased to exist but

1. M. Sadi, L-1.

rather because the intensity of the sunlight makes it impossible that anything other than this concealment should result. In the same way, it is not true that a person becomes God for God is infinitely greater than any man nor has the person really ceased to exist, for ceasing to exist is one thing and becoming lost to view quite another.¹

The sufis describe this state as that of being entirely lost to oneself in contemplation of the unique Being.

Beyond these four stages is one known as "losing consciousness of being lost in divine contemplation" al fana-o-anel fana'. This is due to the total absorption of the understanding of the traveller (Salik), which leads him to forget himself altogether, in the heightened awareness of the King (Sultan) who is unsurpassable in beauty and power.²

FAITH (IMAN):

The faith in Allah, as pointed out by the Shaikh, obviously includes in the unity of God, the Prophethood of Muhammad, His revealed Books including the Holy Qur'an, His Angels, Messengers, life after death and the Day of judgement etc. Besides that one's adherence to and observance of five times prayers, alms (zakat), fasting in the month of Ramadhan,

1. M. Sadi, L-1.

2. Ibid, L-1.

pilgrimage to Mecca and resulting in strict observance of the Shara.¹

According to a tradition (Hadith), says the Shaikh, faith has two parts: Gratitude (Shukr)² and Patience (Sabr).³

Accomplishment of servitude depends upon gratitude in blessings (ni'amat) and to have patience and tolerance in calamities through which one can achieve His contentment (Raza-e-Ilahi).⁴

Moreover, the Shaikh claimed that "If a slave of God offers gratitude in blessings and patience in calamities than consider him that he is having faith (iman) or an unitarian, otherwise, in the absence of these two one's faith becomes fruitless."⁵

WORSHIP OF GOD: (IBADAT):

Thus, the word iman (faith) in the Qur'anic sense is a very comprehensive word. It does not simply means reciting the Kalima (the Islamic formula) or to admit that "There is no God but Allah." It includes will and intention of worshipping

1. M.Sadi, L-25.

2. Ibid, L-43.

3. While going to describe the meaning of the word patience (Sabr), the Shaikh says, 'One who does not express his unhappiness and displeasure when he suffers from calamities and misfortunes.

Maktubat-i-do Sadi, L-55;

Sharah-i-Adab-ul-Muridin, Vol.I, p.95.

4. Monis-ul-Muridin, Ms. Maj.14, f.29;
Maktubat-i-do Sadi, L-51.,; Ibid, L.55.

5. Ibid, L-55.

Allah, which is the main object of creation of man.¹

Worship, as explained by the Shaikh, means complete surrender to the will and sincere obedience to the Command of Allah and to become His true servant and a slave. As slaves do not question the commands of their Master, have no their own free will but subject themselves to the will of the Master, so a worshipper should surrender his will, body and soul to the supreme will of His Lord. He should accept whatever comes from Him, sweet or bitter, and should never demand from Him what he himself desires. He should willingly surrender himself to the Divine decree.²

He should worship God as a true servant without even bothering for reward of anything whether worldly or of the next world (Akhirat). In other words the object of worship is to hope no return and to free oneself from the greed of rewards.

Thus, the basic object of worship is the achievement of freedom from selfish or personal desires, otherwise he would become a worshipper of his own self and slave of his desires.³

1. The Holy Qur'an says "I have not created Jinn and Men except that they should worship Me" (Q.51:56).

2. M.Sadi, L-39.

3. The Shaikh has quoted the saying of Shaikh Abu Ali Saiyyah that "If anyone who worships God in order to fulfil his desire or need is certainly not a servant of God. So, if a devotee is asked whether he would prefer heaven or two prostrations of prayer, he should not utter the word 'heaven'; but should prefer two prostrations of prayer; for heaven is already decreed for him". See, M.Sadi, Eng. tran. Paul Jackson, L-39.

Therefore, points out the Shaikh, seeking reward for submission is a fatal poison. One must learn a lesson from the behaviour of Satan who was thrown away from the Grace of God and His threshold for a single fault. Although he was diligent in his attempt to serve but he could not succeed even for a moment, in becoming a genuine servant.

The true devotee should not own or possess anything of his own, his only object should be the grace of Allah.¹

KNOWLEDGE:

Worship requires knowledge, which serves as its axis and pivot. Khwaja Hasan Basri is reported to have remarked that "Seeking of knowledge is valuable, for it explains worship; conversely, one should pay attention to worship, since it clarifies knowledge."²

The Shaikh further emphasises that knowledge is more exalted, it has priority over worship because it is the source and guide of worship. The Prophet also is quoted to have said that "knowledge directs action, and action follows knowledge."³

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1. Illustrating this point, the Shaikh states, one beloved of God saw a dervish and enquired; "Where are you coming from?" He replied, "From God"! "And where are you going?" "To God", "What is your purpose"? "God"! To every question the reply was the same, "God"!
M. Sadi, L-39.
 2. Ibid- L-37.
 3. Fawa'id Rukni, pp.59-60.

This is the reason why the ascetics of the past, says the Shaikh, used to busy themselves in the pursuit of knowledge more than any other work, because the task of worship depends upon it. If a man of God worships Him with the devotion of the angels of the seven heavens and of the earth, but lacks knowledge, he will gain absolutely nothing.¹

Knowledge helps a man along the road of religion, every austerity and mortification not in accordance with the Law is an error and deviation and belongs to the faith of Satan. All the doors of eternal bliss, Mystical perception of the divine blessings, various ranks of holiness, the grades of those near to God (muggarraban), the secrets of wisdom of Adam's descendants, the secrets of those guilty of grave faults, the respect for ordinances, including the observance of what is commanded and the avoidance of what is prohibited all of these can be recognized only by means of knowledge. Until a man emerges from the wilderness of his own ignorance and places his footsteps on the open plain of knowledge, these blessings of faith will not become manifest within him. Moreover, there is nothing more inimical in the Court of heaven than the quality of ignorance. So also there is no other shorter or impelling way in the Court of sublime than the way of knowledge. Knowledge of God is

1. M. Sadi, L-37.

the nearest door to God, while ignorance¹ is the greatest of the evils that separate one from God.²

Knowledge, therefore, asserts the Shaikh, is essential in order to proceed from the path of the Law (Shari'at) to the way of (Tariqat).³

If a person undertakes austerities all by himself, and if he achieves some vision, so much pride, arrogance, self-conceit, and folly would become manifest in him that he would throw his own faith to the wind and become entangled in the snares of Satan. This is why God has declared in the Holy Qur'an: "He does not befriend an ignorant man".⁴ (Q.17:111).

Knowledge is of two types, the first type of knowledge is / the teacher or through the books, the other one that

/ one gained from

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1. In connection with ignorance, the Shaikh says, Knowledge is fountainhead of all happiness (Sa'adat), whereas, ignorance (Jahal) is the root of all misery (Sagawat). When salvation comes from knowledge destruction from ignorance. M. Sadi, L-55.
 2. Ibid, L-55.
 3. Ma'dan ul Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.VI, f.18,a.
 4. While going to describe the benefit and significant of knowledge, Shaikh says, "God never bestows knowledge to everyone, because knowledge is related to heart, which is immortal and is also related to the World of Truth (Alm-e-Haqiqat)".
see. M.Sadi, L.52.

wells up within the breast of a man. This kind of knowledge is again of two types:

Wahi (revelation), and ilham (inspiration).

The second type of knowledge ilham reaches the heart of a righteous one through the agency of a Prophet or a spiritual master.¹

Thus, a novice should place his hands in those of an experienced guide who will show him the Path of Shara.

The Shaikh himself being a staunch supporter of the Shara exhorts his disciples to strictly observe the Shara and perform the duties prescribed by the Shara, the foremost among them being the prayers.

PRAYER:

According to the Shaikh, one who adopts the mystic discipline should offer the prayers regularly with supererogatory (nawafil) Prayers.² Following the practice of the Sufis

1. Mukh-ul-Ma'ani, Maj, 14, p.25;

M. Sadi, L-55.

2. The Shaikh has instructed his novice to become regular even in offering the prayers like Ishrag (morning prayer), Chasht (mid-morning prayer) and other invocatory prayer (dua), which has been mentioned in the Qut-ul-Qulub, with sincerity and devotion. Besides that these prayers should be offer according to the time given in the same book either after dawn prayer (fazir) and night prayer (Isha).

See. Ibid, L-28;

Khawan-e-pur Ni'amat, Ms. Maj. 36, f.103,b.

the Shaikh also has described in detail the essence¹ of the prayers.

The routine prescribed by the Shaikh is that after his prayer the novice should help and render service to the people.

According to him the prayer should be offer with the purity of heart, devotion, love² and concentration without

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1. In the prayer, according to the Shaikh, God has combined all the pillars of the Shara, such as, fasting, alms giving, Pilgrimage to Mecca and holy war etc. When one offers prayer he abstain from eating and thus, obtained the reward of fasting, when he prays for all the Muslim brothers, 'God, pardon me and other believers, he obtains the reward of alms giving. In pilgrimage to Mecca one alights, sojourns and praises God at the sacred places of Mecca, similarly, he praises God in prayer. Moreover, the Shaikh has compared the meaning of holy war in prayer in the following words: ablution can be compared to donning armour, the prayer leader is like the general, while the people resemble the army. The leader stands in the front like in the sanctuary where the battle will be joined. The people are drawn up in ranks behind him. United they come to his aid. When they are victorious in the war, they share the booty among themselves. When the leader gives the final blessings of peace, he distributes the grace of the Lord of Glory.

See. M. Sadi, L-32.

2. The most important requirement of love, according to the Qur'an, is to follow the foot steps of the Prophet:

"If ye do Love God / will love you and forgive you your sins: For God is Oft forgiving, most merciful." (Q.3:31)
/ follow me: God

an urge for Paradise or fear of hell. He should feel as if he is in the presence of Allah. Such prayers contain in them the essence of fasting. Pilgrimage to Mecca, almsgiving and holy war and above all the spiritual ascent (miraj).

FASTING:

Explaining the spirit of fasting, the Shaikh points out that strength of the body depends on food and drink, whereas, spiritual strength depends on going hungry and thirsty, as one of the qualities of God Almighty is that "He feeds others but Himself does not" (Q._:14). Therefore, in order to make one's actions like those of Allah, the devotee should feed others and remain himself hungry, then he will approximate the qualities of the Beloved.¹

ALMSGIVING (ZAKAT):

Regarding the Zakat (almsgiving), the Shaikh says that a Sufi does not and should not possess wealth, therefore, the question of zakat being paid by a Sufi does not arise.²

THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA (HAJ):

The view of the Shaikh regarding pilgrimage to Mecca (Haj) is similar to that of earlier mystics, that the aim

1. M.Sadi, L-33.

2. According to Shaikh Imam Shibli, a Sufi should immediately give away in charity whatever comes to him like Hazrat Abu Bakr.

See, Ibid, L-34.

of the pilgrimage to Mecca should be a visit to and vision of the Lord but not merely the house of the Lord.¹

1. According to Shaikh Bayazid of Bistam, "When I went to the Holy Place and saw the beauty of the Kaaba, I said to myself: "I have seen much better materials than those employed in the construction of this building! " I desired the Lord of the house. I returned home. The following year when I reached the Holy place, I opened the eyes of my conscience and saw not only the house but also the Lord of the house. I said: 'In the divine world there is no room for anything except God, in the world of the divine Unity duality is excluded. The Beloved, the house, and I would be three. Anyone who perceived duality would be an unbeliever, and yet I see three. I returned home. The third year, when I reached the Holy Place, the divine favour swept me into its embrace; the curtain of whatever is not God was removed from my power of discernment; my heart was illumined with the fame of mystical knowledge; my being was inflamed by the lights of divine illumination; and this saying filled my head: 'You have come to visit Me with an honest heart, and the One who is visited has the right to bless the one who visits Him!'"

See. M.Sadi, Eng. tran, Paul Jackson, L.35.

See also, Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XIV, ff.70a-72a

This approach_sincere devotion and performance of the prescribed duties in accordance with the Shara will strengthen the bond between the devotee and the Lord. But the Shaikh lays equal emphasis on the character building and cultivation of noble qualities also.¹

Every one who is scrupulous in following the Shara, emphasises the Shaikh, should develop a better disposition, and whoever has a better disposition arrives at the threshold of the Lord himself. A believer should certainly be better than ordinary people, and should serve an example for others. This is the command of God Almighty and the injunction of the Law of His Prophet. All the actions of the Prophet have been pleasing, and everyone who aspires to follow him should lead the sort of life he led.²

He should be affable and courteous in all his affairs and in his dealings with others, both those who are close to him and those who are not.

He should behave politely and should not get angry and should not act in an unbecoming way that might change someone's happy state to sadness.

He should always be cheerful and somewhat reticent. Whenever he meets anyone, he should be the first to offer greetings and should be kind and liberal.

1. M. Sadi, L-59.

2. Ibid, L-59.

He should not indulge in beekbiting and telling lies and other moral vices.¹

In short, he should follow the example of the Prophet in his day-to-day power².

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1. There are, observes the Shaikh, in man animal like qualities that correspond to the various beasts of prey, wild animals and brute beasts. Whatever quality becomes predominate this life will be the one in accordance with which the order will be given tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement) that he be raised in that form, rather than in his present human form.

For example, says the Shaikh, the person who is overcome by rage will be raised in the form of dog. The man who succumbs to lustful desires will be raised as pig. Whoever is overcome by pride will be raised as a leopard, so far and so on. See, M.Sadi, L-72.

2. The Shaikh has described in detail the day-to-day life and noble virtues of the Prophet that he used to arrange the fodder for his own mount. He used to go to home and light the lamp himself. When the strap of his sandal broke, he himself repaired it. He used to mend his torn garments with his own hand. He helped the servants in the house work. If a stranger was aggrieved with him, he will never punish him. He never curses or taunts and abuse or vile language come out of his mouth. He was always smiling and cheerful, and always the first to wish the other peace, when ever he met any Muslim. He used to sit with his companions as one of them and addressed them in a respectful manner. Whenever any questions religious or pertaining to worldly asked he give their reply immediately or after descent of Wahi (revelation). He used to pay visit to see the sick and sometimes naurish them, accept gifts whether it might be trifle, a drop of water or mouthful milk.
See. M.Sadi, L-59.

VEILS (HIJAB)

The Shaikh further warns the novice of certain hindrances which come in the way of a disciple and distract his attention. According to the Shaikh, there are four veils or hindrances, namely:

The World,
Creatures,
Satan and
Ego

This world, says the Shaikh, veils the next world ; creatures the worship; Satan the faith; and the ego the Lord.¹

WORLD (DUNIYA):

The views of the Shaikh about the worldly things and their utilization may be summed up as follows:²

Whatever exists in this world may be classified into two categories:

In the first category come all those things which have been declared unlawful and are strictly prohibited. These things are acquired only for sensual pleasure and for the satisfaction of carnal desires and which cannot be used for

1. M. Sadi, L-37;

Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XXIV, f.109-b;

Matghz-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Maj, 17, f.13-a .

2. M. Sadi, L-74. See also Tohfa-e-Ghaibi, Ms. f.59;
Maktubat-i-do Sadi, L-5.

the sake of the Lord, (for instance, drinking and gambling). It is such things which are called 'Worldly' and have been condemned by the Law as well as by all the Sufis.

In the second category come all those things which are lawful and may or sometimes should be acquired only to the extent that one may not become helpless and destitute, and may worship God with peace of mind.

These things may be acquired or used with two conditions: firstly, the utilization should be within minimum limit, in order to satisfy the basic needs to the extent they are indispensable. If the devotee crosses the limit he might be close to living in ease and comfort, which is not permitted. He should, in this respect, follow the example of Owais Qarani, who restricted his necessities of life so much that the people thought he had gone mad .

The second important condition is that all these things should be utilized with good intention, i.e. should be for the sake of God (not for the pleasure of the soul).

This is why, the Shaikh has warned, that even the acts of worship like, meditation, praise of God (zikr), and control of one's passions (shahwat), become useless rather harmful if performed with the intention to gain worldly fame and status. For instance, if the intention behind praise of God is to acquire popularity and respect among the masses as a pious or Godly man or if the intention behind subjugation of

one's soul is to achieve the rank of devotee (abid) or ascetic (zahid) among the people, then such devotional exercises are useless.

Thus, the worldly life, according to the Shaikh, means acquisition of prohibited and unlawful things, utilization of lawful things merely for the sake of sensual desires or indulgence in material things beyond the prescribed minimum limit. It is this excessive use of material things which is called the 'World' and which should be abandoned.¹

It is this type of abandonment which is called zuhd by the Sufis.

ABSTENTION (ZUHD):

According to Khwaja Junaid, there are three types of zuhd:

1. Abandonment of what is forbidden, it is the zuhd of ordinary people.
2. Abandonment of overabundance of lawful things.
This is the zuhd of the elect.
3. Abandonment of all those things which might draw the attention of the devotee away from God, and this is the zuhd of the sufis.²

1. M. Sadi, L-74.

2. Ibid, L-75.

The Shaikh further points out that zuhd is of two kinds:

The first one, which is within the power of the devotee, and the other one that is not within his power.

The former means, abandoning the quest for things he does not have in the world, giving up things which are related to the world and, to get rid of desire for worldly things.

The other type of zuhd, which is not within a devotee's power means that even the thought of the world becomes cold to his heart. This is obviously beyond the control of a devotee, but, observes the Shaikh, if a devotee carries out whatever form of abstention he is capable of achieving then he is granted, by the grace and bounty of God, that type of abandonment (zuhd), which is not within his own power. Only after this one can sincerely and whole heartedly devote himself to the worship of God.¹

CREATURES (KHALQ):

The second major hindrance is mixing or association with the people which prevents a novice from devoting himself to the service of the Lord and induces him to commit sins and ultimately ruins his spirituality and sanctity.²

1. M. Sadi, L-75.

2. Ibid, L-94;

Ma'dan ul Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. 25, f.117.a.

Another harmful aspect of association with the people is that whatever one acquires through his devotion is rendered vain because of his hypocrisy (riya), artificiality and vanity.¹

The general condition of the people as related by Hatim, an eminent saint is that, They are devoid of worship and austerities, do not co-operate in pious deeds, nor satisfied with those who do the same, rather create hindrances in their way, and become their enemies. Hence, it is necessary for a disciple to seek seclusion and withdraw from the people in order to be able to devote himself to the worship of Allah peacefully.

The Shaikh further strengthens his argument by quoting a number of traditions, in which, the Prophet is reported to have suggested his companions to adopt seclusion during the age of spiritual anarchy.² He then quotes Shaikh Sufiyan Thawri's

1. M. Sadi, L-94.

2. It has been reported by Abdullah ibn Amr Ibn al-As that the Prophet while describing a state of tumult advised him, "It is necessary to keep to your house, and to maintain a watch over your tongue. Hold on to whatever you know, and abandon whatever you don't. It is for you to attend to your own work, and ignore the work of somebody else." It is related that the Apostle said, "It is a time of distress (haraaj)."
The people said, 'O Ap^ostle of God, what time should be called a time of distress?' He replied, 'It means a time when a man cannot feel secure with those who sit down beside him'.
Another tradition related by Ibn Masud is that the Prophet suggested to flee far from such an age, when there will be many preachers but few are endowed with knowledge; many who ask, but few who give, there will be many who boast for their knowledge, prayers are abandoned and bribery is embraced, faith is sold for some merely worldly trinket."
Ibid, L-94.

saying that, "Seclusion had become lawful in his age."¹ From these statements, the Shaikh concludes, that if seclusion was considered lawful during the age of Sufiyan Thawri, then during his own time it had become rather necessary.

But, seclusion, according to the Shaikh, is of two types:

The first one is related to a man who has no knowledge, hence is not needed by the people, for he cannot impart

1. Moreover, Sufiyan Thawri is reported to have exhorted his followers: "Realized that you are in such an age when the companions of the Apostle were seeking a refuge from that they found was happening then. And remember, they had a knowledge we don't possess. They also had helpers that we don't, as well as a power denied to us. What sort of state should we be in here and now? We have but little knowledge, less patience, and scarcely any helpers! Khwaja Fuzayl Ayyaz is reported to have said, "This is an age when a person should keep a careful watch over his tongue. He should also live in a secluded spot. He should treat his own heart. He should keep quiet about what he knows and abandon what he does not." Daud Tai has said, "Fast from this world and break your fast in the next. Flee from people as you would from a lion." Once, Haram Ibn Hayyan asked to Khwaja Owais Qarani, "Come along with me so that we can be near each other and to visit each other. But Owais Qarani replied in visiting and meeting there is nothing but hypocrisy and artificiality."

M. Sadi, L-94.

religious knowledge to others. Such a person should separate himself entirely from the people, he should not mix with the people except during the congregational or Friday and Id prayers or on occasion, such as, Pilgrimage or other religious gatherings. But he should not disassociate himself from such lawful gatherings except when he is unable to attend such assemblies on genuine ground or if he knows that the harm that would accrue to him from such gathering would be greater than the benefit of such participation.¹

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1. It is said that a very learned old man in Mecca did not attend even the Friday gathering or congregational prayers, when he was asked the reason, he said, "The sin that is my lot as a result of mingling with men is greater than the merit that accrues to me as a result of participating in the Friday prayer". The common opinion of the members of this group concerning this work, however, is that they should mix with the people during the Friday gathering and congregational prayer, as well as in charitable works, but, apart from these occasions, they should remain separate from others. If, however, anybody resides in a city but does not take part in the Friday gathering or congregational prayer, he is doing something of great significance. It requires a very fine perception and a perfect knowledge. It is not allowable for everybody."

M. Sadi, Eng. tran. Paul Jackson, L-95.

The second type of seclusion is concerned with those people who are the learned ones and are needed by the people to guide them in religious affairs or can prevent innovation and preach the divine mission by means of their words and deeds, such people are strictly prohibited from withdrawing from the people. They should remain in the society and perform their duties. They, emphasizes the Shaikh, should live bodily with the people but keep their hearts completely cut off from the people. This is the seclusion of the spirit and the heart, which is the essence of seclusion.¹

SATAN:

The third major obstacle, as pointed out by the Shaikh, is Satan, who personifies the forces of evil and whose character has been described in a number of ayats of the Holy Qur'an. He is the oldest enemy of man, who had thrown challenge to mislead Adam and his offsprings in this world.²

1. M. Sadi, L-95.

2. As has been described in the Holy Qur'an:

He (Satan) said: "Give me respite till the day they are raised up". God said: "Be thou among those who have respite" (Q.VII: 14-5).

Satan Said: "Because Thou hast thrown me out of the Way, lo ! I will lie in wait for them on Thy straight Way" (Q. VII: 16). "Then will I assault them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left, nor with Thou find, in most of them, gratitude (For Thy mercies)." (God) said: "Get out from this, disgraced and expelled. If any of them follow thee, Hell will I find with you all (Q. VII: 17-8).

As he is invisible his machination and tricks can not easily be detected. He has been allowed to seduce and incite man. Therefore, he is the most dangerous enemy of mankind. His sole object is to mislead the devotees of Allah by means of a number of tricks. He holds back them from worship, repenting and following the right path and instigates them in deceitful ways. For instance, he deceives a devotee suggesting that, "What is the point of repenting when one can not remain steadfast".¹

Sometimes he suggests that the purpose of abandoning sin is to ensure that evil desires and natural instincts are subdued! The purpose of remembering God (zikr) is to attain true vision of the Lord; and that observance of the Law is to attain Union with the Lord. When these objects are achieved, deceives the Satan, there is no need of abandoning sin, remembering God and observance of the Law.²

In short, numerous are the tricks of Satan and it is difficult to overcome his machination, it is the observance of

f.n. continued.

Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer: will Ye not then abstain? (Q.V: 94). Finally, the Holy Qur'an says . "Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy. He only invites his adherents, that they may become companions of the Blazing fire" (Q.XXXV:6)

Besides these Qur'anic ayats, there are number of other ayats, in which God Almighty warns believers to save themselves from the treacherous tricks of Satan. For instance, (VII:48), (XXXVI:60); (IV:117-120); (XXIV:21); (XIV:22). etc.

1. M. Sadi, L-3.

2. Ibid, L-17.

the Law, asserts the Shaikh, which can save the devotee from the snare of the Satan¹, who circulates like the blood in a body², but can excite only those who themselves have desire and urge for sin.³ The true devotees in treading the divine path are beyond the reach of the Satan.⁴

1. M. Sadi, L.37.

2. The Shaikh Says, "Satan also has a certain amount of power over a man's person, coursing through the blood that circulates in the veins of his body. See. Ibid, L.20.

3. The Shaikh has quoted the saying of Khwaja Muhammad ibn Balkhi "I am astonished that anyone should go to His house in order to practice austerities out of his own unchecked desire. Why does he not tread desire underfoot in order to reach Him and see Him"? Thus, the Shaikh says that the "Satan does not have the power to arouse sinful or lustful desires in the heart of a devotee. It is only when they have originated in the heart then the Satan pounces on them. This is known as a temptation of the devil. It has to take its origin from a man's inner desire.

Ibid, L-82.

4. This has been confirmed through a Qur'anic ayat, that in spite of machination of Satan, the pious, and God fearing persons are protected by God. When the Satan Said "I shall lead all men astray", the Lord rebuked him, "Surely you have no authority over my servants". (Q.17:65).

Ibid, L-82.

SOUL (NAFS):

The fourth obstacle is the nafs (Soul).¹ There is a difference of opinion among the mystics regarding the definition of nafs.² What may be gathered from different views of the sufis is that the nafs is the commanding soul or essence in a body like the spirit (ruh). It is some sort of a guiding force which determines the course of action. It may be good or bad by nature, that is, it may generate good or evil desires, but the general tendency of the soul is that it errs and leads to sensuality.³ Therefore, it is to be trained and controlled, for if it is left free it incites to commit sins, and thus ruins one's faith.⁴

The soul, declares the Shaikh, can be subjugated⁵ only through the observance of the Shara.⁶

1. M. Sadi, L-37.

2. Some say, that the soul is an essence within the body similar to spirit (ruh), another group says, it is a quality of the body like life,
Ibid, L-81.

3. According to the Shaikh, 'The root of all the discord, infamy, baseness destruction, sin and calamity with which mankind has been afflicted from the very origin of creation till the Day of Judgement, is nothing but the soul (nafs).
Ibid, L.83.

4. The calamity of the soul strikes more lethally and swiftly than an infidel, and more frequently than the deception of Satan and his cunning. Ibid, L.83.

5. Subjugation of the soul, according to the Shaikh, means proper training and control not its extinction. see:
Ibid, L-58;

Ibid, L-83, Ibid, L-84.

6. See, Ibid, L-58; Ibid, L-90; Ibid, L-96.

Various ways have been prescribed to liberate oneself from one's soul, such as, to keep away from all lustful desires and pleasures by placing heavy load of devotion, through rendering services to the people, rigorous austerities¹ like, hunger² and fast, resorting to begging,³ fear of God (tagwa),⁴ humiliation⁵ and through lamentation, supplication⁶ and begging help from God.

When a disciple follows these instructions he passes through several spiritual stages⁷ and ultimately enters the divine world and achieves his goal, i.e. spiritual accomplishment and union with the Lord.

1. M. Sadi, L-28.

2. Ibid, L-84;

Monis-ul-Muridin, Ms. Maj. 19, ff.38-9.

3. M. Sadi, L-69; Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.17, ff.83 b-84 a.

4. M.Sadi, L-64;

Ibid, L-83.

5. Ibid, L-92.

6. Ibid, L-85.

7. Technically known as the world of humanity (alm-e-nasut), world of sovereignty (alm-e-Malakut), world of power (alm-e-jabrut) and world of divinity (alm-e-Lahut)

See. M.Sadi, L-57; Maktubat-i-do Sadi, L-101;

Maktubat-i-bisht o hasht or Maktubat jawabi, L-2;

Fawa'id Rukni, p.41.

(B) THE KHANQAH LIFE:

ORIGIN OF KHANQAH

The first Khanqah in the world, according to Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, is the 'Kaaba, 'built by Adam, the first Sufi on earth. Similarly, the 'Bait ul Muqaddas' at Jerusalem was the Khanqah of Prophets like, Moses and Jesus Christ. Later, in many other countries and territories Khanqahs were built for the purpose of worshipping God, where secrets of God Almighty were discussed in solitude.

Finally, Prophet Muhammad following the same tradition, built a mosque at Medina where a portion was used for the same purpose and where a selected group of persons known as Ashab-e-Suffa, the travellers on the Path, used to converse the secrets of God, the mysteries of Islam which were beyond the reach of ordinary people.

FIRST FIRDAUSI KHANQAH AT BIHAR-SHARIF

The Shaikh, however, himself did not built any khanqah. He had spent a long time in the dense forest of Bihea (Shahabad Distt. Bihar) and Rajgir Hills in order to complete his spiritual training through rigorous selfmortification and austerities. After sometime, Maulana Nizamuddin Maula, one of the disciples of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and other devoted Muslims compelled and requested the Shaikh to settle down at Bihar-Sharif, where Majd-ul-Mulk, Governor of Bihar, constructed a Khanqah for the Shaikh at the instance

of Sultan Muhammed bin Tughluq. It had a separate cell and a portico (Hujra wa Riwaq), for the Shaikh, where he was seated on a Bulgarian prayer mat presented by the Sultan.

The Governor organized a function, invited a number of Sufis including disciples of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, who were there. A feast and later, Sama' (audition party) was held in the courtyard of the jama'at khanah.

The Sufis present in the assembly requested the Shaikh (Sharafuddin Maneri) to sit on the prayer carpet, sent to him by the Sultan.¹

The Shaikh reluctantly² accepted their proposal and became the Sajjadanashin of the Khanqah.

He is reported to have remarked that most of the pseudo-Shaikhs who hankered after rank and power had occupied Khanqahs and exploited the masses.³ This is why, when Sajjada-nashini was offered to him he reacted bitterly and lamented before the audience that he had been installed like an idol in the temple.

1. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.61, f. 261.b.

2. When the Shaikh was asked to accept the post of Sajjada-nashini, he remarked, 'O, my friend your companionship with me has brought me to this level, amounting to installing me in an idol temple'. (Ganj-i-La-Yakhfa, Ms. Maj-29, f.40 a-b). On one occasion the Shaikh is reported to have described the basic qualifications of a Sajjadanashin. See. Salah Mukhlis Daud Khan, Munis-ul-Muridin, Ms. Maj.4, f.5.

3. M. Sadi, L-82.

On another occasion when his disciple Shaikh Hamiduddin requested him to extend the Veranda (court Yard) of the Khanqah, the Shaikh was very much displeased with the suggestion and in anger told him that he rather preferred to demolish the entire structure of the temple (meaning thereby the Khanqah).¹

Inspite of his inhibition, the Shaikh lived in and maintained the Khanqah on the traditional pattern.

TRAINING OF DISCIPLES:

The Khanqah was basically a centre, where spiritual knowledge were imparted and disciples were trained in the mystic discipline. Those who were keen to adopt the mystic discipline were formally made the disciple after performing bai'at and receiving a cap from the Shaikh.²

Those who had an urge lived in the Khanqah permanently devoted themselves to various principles and austerities, prescribed by the Shaikh and performed the duties assigned by him (the Shaikh).

1. Ganj-i-la-Yakhfa, Ms. f.40,b.

2. For instance, "In one of the assemblies, a person made request to become disciple of the Shaikh, which was accepted and a four cornered cap (tagia-i-Chahar Turki) was offered. See. Munis ul Muridin Ms. Maj.9, f.14.

The Shaikh used to address them and discuss different problem on mysticism. Some of them studied the Holy Qur'an and books on mysticism and discussed their problems with the Shaikh.¹

Besides delivering lectures on mysticism, the Shaikh wrote numerous letters addressed to his disciples in which he has discussed almost all the mystic life and discipline.

Some of the devotees of the Shaikh, who could not personally come to the Khanqah were allowed to be admitted in the mystic fold in absentia.²

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1. When Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi was busy in spiritual training, once he appeared before the Shaikh and asked, "Whenever he goes for devotion and contemplation in seclusion, love of one of his wives (whose name is unknown) creates obstacle and diverts his attention from God. The Shaikh remained silent for some times and in the meanwhile the Maulana at once divorced his wife. The Shaikh hearing this remarked "Maulana you have completed your task, there is no need of seclusion".

Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.38.

2. For Shaikh's view on this topic see, Khwan-i-pur Nijat, Ms. Maj.41. The Shaikh accepted Malik Shamsuddin as his disciple only after receiving his letter. He sent a cap and asked to invite Sufis whoever present there, after two prostrations of prayer to wear the cap (Maktubat-i-do-Sadi, L.52). Similarly, the Shaikh also accepted Qazi Hishamuddin of Daulatabad as his disciple through letter correspondence.

Ibid. L-91.

MAINTENANCE OF KHANQAH:

The Shaikh and later his disciples following the Suhrawardi tradition accepted jagirs¹ and gifts² from the

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1. Shaikh Sharafu'ddin Maneri is reported to have accepted the offer of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq who sent a farman to the Governor of Bihar to assign the pargana of Rajgir Hills as jagir for the maintenance of the Khanqah.

Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. ff.133-5;

Ganj-i-la-yakhfa, Ms f 52 b.

According to another source, the Governor of Bihar offered a piece of land to the Shaikh who accepted it but handed over it to his disciple Maulana Amun of Charwayan See- Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj. 10. p.20.

2. The Shaikh is reported to have accepted a lumpsum amount of 5000 gold coins as present from Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq, as gift.

Malik Shamsu'ddin, one of the disciples of the Shaikh sent cash and kind which was accepted by the Shaikh.

The Shaikh is also reported to have received one hand kerchief and a ~~woollen~~ dress from Malik Mufarraḥ, as gift. For detail see- Maktubat-i-do-Sadi, L-45.

Similarly, Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi had accepted present like garment (jama) from Sultan Ghyasuddin Azam Shah of Bengal. (Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Balkhi, L-154).

According to another letter he has acknowledged acceptance of an Egyptian prayer mat (Musalla-i-Misri), sent by the addressee through khwaja Hisamu'ddin Bajjaz, a cloth merchant, (Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Balkhi, L-132.)

rulers as well as other people without any inhibition.¹ With these sources of income he maintained the Khanqah and the Langar (free Kitchen), helped the poor, needy and way-farers

This income was obviously not sufficient to meet the expenses of the Khanqah. The Shaikh, therefore, had to borrow money and grain etc. from the local baggals (Hindu-money lenders and merchants).² These debts were cleared whenever the Shaikh received cash or gifts from his supporters and followers.

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1. The Shaikh's view is totally contrary to the tradition established by the early eminent scholars and great Sufis like, Imam al-Ghazzali and particularly the Chishti saints, who even declared illegal, the gifts and presents from their contemporary rulers, nobles and even believers, on the basis of their doubtful sources of income. But Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri made it clear that, 'When a man is outwardly (zahir) predominated with righteousness and fear of God (taqwa) there is no difficulty in accepting his gifts and presents (sila wa futuh), nor it is necessary to discuss and investigate their origin.'

See, M. Sadi, L-84.

2. A. Hindu grocer (Baggal) who had his shop near the door of his residence used to supply the daily food grains needed by the inhabitants of the Khanqah on credit. When the total amount of value of ratib (ration) reached to one thousand rupees, the shop keeper sent information to the Shaikh and his debts was cleared with the presents and offers came from various sources. See. Ganj-i-La-Yakhfa, Ms. f.52. b.

Another source of information is that once Zain Badr 'Arabi presented himself before the Shaikh made request that he was involved in debts and he invoked blessings of the Shaikh for his firm resolve not to leave the world till he had not cleared off the debts personally or through present received from his friends.

See, Tohfa-i-Ghaibi, Ms. f.31.

The Shaikh had assigned different tasks¹ to his disciples i.e. looking after the Khanqah.

Such duties were assigned to those disciples who lived in the Khanqah permanently or for a long period² under the strict supervision of the Shaikh.

Besides the permanent³ residents of the Khanqah a number of people travellers from different parts of the country

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1. For instance, Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi was entrusted with the duty to serve and look-after the mendicants (faqirs) of the Khanqah. Whenever and whatever the inhabitants of Khanqah demanded or asked for, he at once obeyed them without any hesitation or discrimination. Even he used to patch up the dresses of the faqirs if necessary.
See, Manaqib-ul-Asfiya. Ms. f.38.
 2. According to an information supplied by Shaikh Ahmad Langar Darya, during the life time of his father Shaikh Hasan Daim - Balkhi, nearly 30 to 40 Sufis used to remain busy constantly in spiritual exercises and self-mortification in the Khanqah. (Monis-ul-Qulub, Maj.14, f.11). From this scanty information one can presume that during the early Firdausi saints the Khanqah had become a centre, permanent asylum of learning and training, where Godly men, derweshes not only theoretically learnt knowledge but practically were trained under the Shaikh's guidance.
 3. Shaikh Chawlahi, a Hindu convert accompanied the Shaikh from the Rajgir Hills and was appointed as personal attendant of the Shaikh. Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, right from his admittance into the Firdausi order remained in the Khanqah and was entrusted with the task to look after the affairs of Khanqah.
Shaikh Hamiduddin was another saint who used to remain with the Shaikh in seclusion.
Maulana Amun is reported to have stayed with the Shaikh for 12 years in the Khanqah.
According to Ganj-i-la-Yafna, Shaikh's chief attendant (Khadim khas) was Amir Sikandar.

used to come to the Khanqah in order to have the blessings of the Shaikh.¹

The category of visitors included rulers,² nobles,³ 'Ulama, Shaikhs and a number of people from outside India also used to visit his Khanqah. For instance, Shamsuddin⁴ came from

1. Like, Shaikh Ahmad Diwali and his brother Zakariyya both from Delhi and Awarif from Arul came to his Khanqah. The Shaikh with great interest enquired about their circumstances and native places.

See, Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. LIV, f.237-b.

2. Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq is reported to have visited the Khanqah of the Shaikh during his expedition to Bengal. Although, no historians has referred to such a visit.

The Sultan offered his prayer behind the Shaikh, who is reported to have congratulated the Sultan for his victory.

For detail discussion see, Rafiq-ul-Arifin, malfuzat of Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri (d.1452 A.D.)

Fawa'id-i-Rukniyya, compiled by Imamuddin Shattari, Ms. ff.37-8.

3. Among the nobles, Malik Zainuddin, Majd-ul-Mulk, and Khwaja Khizr, Deputy Governor of Bihar are reported to have frequently visited the Shaikh and taken part in the discussions in the assemblies of the Shaikh. Moreover, nobles like Malik Mahmud and Malik Nasiruddin Qalimghani are included among the visitors.

Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. XXI, f.103-a; Chap. XXXIV, ff.191 b-192 a.;

Mukh-ul-Ma'ani, Maj.28, p.65;

Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj. 1P.2.

4. He is reported to have stayed in the Khanqah for sometime and started learning Adab-ul-Muridin under the supervision of Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri.

See, Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. XXXV, f.155 a.

Khwarizam, Khwaja Mammun¹ from Multan, a darwesh from Afghanistan²,
a traveller from Bukhara,³ and Hafiz Jalalu'ddin from Multan.⁴

1. Khwan-e-pur Ni'amat, Ms. Maj. 16, f.49, a.

2. He was a reputed darwesh who attended the assembly of the Shaikh and put questions on mystic ideology like, Sufi property and blood.

Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.XXX, f.135, a.

3. He was impressed with the personality of the Shaikh to such an extent that he became a disciple of the Shaikh and received a cap.

Rahat-ul-Qulub, Maj.2. p.5.

4. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.23, f.108, b.

C. RELATIONS WITH AND IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF THE SOCIETY:

It was this discipline of the Firdausi saints which exercised tremendous influence on the ruling class as well as the common people.

POLITICAL:

RELATION WITH THE RULERS:

The Firdausi saints neither rigidly adopted the Chishti Policy of isolation nor intervened in the political affairs, or freely mixed with the rulers like the Suhrawardi saints. They with dignity maintained cordial relation with the rulers but whenever felt necessary, they even, vehemently criticised them for arbitrary measures.

The pioneer saint of the Firdausi order, Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al Maneri, lived for about 120 years and during this long period, he had witnessed the rise and fall of three dynasties and the rule of about eleven sultans on the throne of Delhi, but his relation with the two Tughluq rulers, i.e. Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firoz Shah Tughluq were quite intimate.

RELATION WITH MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ (1325-51 A.D.):

When Muhammad bin Tughluq ascended the throne of Delhi in 1324 A.D. he seems to have heard much about Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri's austerities and spiritual accomplishment. He had deep faith in and regard for the Shaikh. This is why, he had asked the saint to write some of his principles and

teachings to him. The Shaikh in reply to the letter of the Sultan has discussed some of the problems of mysticism. The letter runs as follows: "As requested by you, dear Brother! I have prayed to God to set right all your worldly and religious affairs, and it is expected that the signs of response would be seen by you before long and you would become an adorer (of God) whereby the bounties would increase and never decrease, and your end by the grace of Allah and His benevolence would be safe.

Further, you, o Brother !, have requested me to write specially for you something about Sufi science. This should be known to you, o Brother!, that the Sufi science is very profound and magnificent. As much of it as could be given the shape of the words, I have already written and you, have acknowledged receipt of two volumes. But who in this world has ever written that part which words cannot contain, and how can I attempt it? The only answer that I can give to you is that he who has not been promoted in the way of Path would not know the Reality and he who is deprived of the real mystical norm will never know anything. Nothing further".¹

In another letter, the Shaikh has indirectly warned the Sultan against the harmful effects of wealth and power and

1. Maktubat-i-do Sadi, Ms. KBOPL, Patna, L. 207.

has admonished him not to follow the footsteps of powerful rulers like Pharaoh, Shaddad and Namrud.¹

These two letters show the mutual understanding and respect for each other and the Saint's advice to the Sultan to remain content with the Mercy of Allah, might have impressed the Sultan who is reported to have sent a Bulgarian prayer mat for the Shaikh and a farman (order) to Zain-ud-din,² Majd-ul-Mulk, the Governor of Bihar, to construct a Khanqah for the Shaikh and to assign the jagir of Rajgir for its upkeep,³ which the Shaikh accepted reluctantly.

The Shaikh, however, is reported to have remarked about the whimsical character of the Sultan in the following words: "While the Khans and Maliks were seated on their respective seats, they were filled with fear, apprehending and unknown calamity to take on them. And lo! some were suddenly removed from their seats, hand cuffed and haltered and were either thrown into a well or sent to a prison. And certain ulama dressed in turban had suddenly to replace their turbans with the Brahmanic thread (Zunnar). To day, so speak they are in turban tomorrow they may have to wear the zunnar, could

1. Maktubat-i-do Sadi, letter 207, Ms. No.1394.

2. He was the Governor of Bihar during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, who is said to have expelled the Raja Har Singh of Tirhut by the order of the sultan.

See, Deyamudin Ahmad, Op.Cit. pp.25 & 157.

3. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.86 a.

they abstain? No."¹

RELATION WITH FIROZ SHAH TUGHLAQ: (1351-1388 A.D.)

The Shaikh, after the death of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq in 1351 A.D. paid a visit to the court of Delhi and handed over the sanad of the jagir of Rajgir Hills to Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq. The latter accepted it reluctantly but presented five thousand gold coins in cash.

The Shaikh, following the Suhrawardi Saint Shaikh Najibuddin Abul Qahir Suhrawardi, adopted the view in accordance with the Qur'anic injunction, "Obey Allah and the Prophet and those who are in command over you." (Q.V)

But he never hesitated in criticising² the oppressive acts of the rulers and warned them that they would have to

1. Mukh-ul-Ma'ani, Maj 16, p.28.

2. Overall, it was liberal attitude of the Shaikh that impelled him to condemn and curse the Sultan when he came to know about the execution of Ahmad Bihari and Azz Kakoï by the order of Firoz Shah Tughluq. The Shaikh out of anger is reported to have remarked, "It is really surprising if the town where blood of such godly persons was shed, continue to enjoy prosperity for long." On the other hand, Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq has justified his action in his Futuhāt in the following words, "Another community were atheists who misguided people in the name of solitude and renunciation and they enrol people under that organization. The leader of the misguided atheist was Ahmad Bihari, who was considered as God by the people. It was alleged that Ahmad's disciples preached that "God has appeared in Delhi in the form of Ahmad". The allegations against Ahmad Bihari and his associates were proved correct, and both were executed." See for detail, Futuhāt-i-Firoz Shahi, ed. by Shaikh Abdul Rashid, Aligarh, 1954, p.7.

pay for their cruelty on the Day of Judgement (Kayamat).

In one of his letters he says that, "Kings, their agents and officers would be required to give an account of their oppressive acts and for the innocent blood that might have been shed by them. Their good works might out weight their works of mischief."¹

According to him the real function of a ruler is to feed the needy, to clothe the naked, to rehabilitate the broken hearted and to serve the destitute. When some people informed him about the benevolent and saintly character of a ruler, who kept awake the whole night in prayers and observed fast during the day. The Shaikh commented that the ruler was neglecting his own task while he was doing the work of others. As offering of excessive prayers is concerned, the Shaikh pointed out, it could be done by others like saints.²

Therefore, the real duty of a Sultan, according to the Shaikh, is to render justice to the oppressed one, to watch and ward safety of the common people. And on this basis the Shaikh has justified his contact with the rulers, for he like the Suhrawardi saints, recommended the cases of the oppressed to the rulers and the nobles.

SERVICE TO MANKIND:

The Shaikh not only advocated ~~theoretically~~ but, infact,

1. Ganj-i-la-yafna, Ms. f.58.

2. Maktubat-i-do-Sadi, L-92;

Ibid, L-47;

Ibid, L-72.

he used to help the people who came to him for help. He himself has narrated that when he was in that old cave (meaning thereby Rajgir Hills, where he was busy in spiritual exercises) there was a governor who oppressed the people, who used to come to the Shaikh to interceded on their behalf. The Shaikh used to write down their complaints and forwarded them to the authorised concerned.¹

Similarly , when the Shaikh received a complaint from Khwaja Zafarabadi, who was deprived of his property by the officers. The Shaikh recommended the case to Sultan Firoz Shah to redress the grievance.²

In a letter to a noble Malik Mufarraḥ, the Shaikh has exhorted him to help the needy by all means and console the broken heart as far as possible, which is a great task.³

The same attitude was adopted by his disciples. Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, the chief Khalifa of the Shaikh has

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1. Khwan-i-pur-Ni'amat; Ms. Maj. 16, ff.49b-50a.
 2. He has justified this approach by quoting several instances from the life of the Prophet who is reported to have interceded on behalf of the oppressed. For instance, he has quoted a tradition where the Prophet is reported to have helped a Christian in getting back his wealth illegally seized by Abu Jahal, a powerful Meccan leader.
See, Maktubat-i-do-Sadi, L-95.
 3. Ibid, L-72.
The Shaikh gave same advice to one of his disciples Haji Ruknuddin, too.
See, Fawa'id Rukni, p.35.

the hungry_ placing water on the roads for the thirsty, founding mosque, running about to acquire the necessary means of supporting the life of his family and children so as to discharge his duty and so on and so forth."¹

Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, in one of his letters relates that once a merchant of Khawaspur, Khwaja Siraj was subjected to some illegal tax. The Maulana interceded on his behalf and get him exempted from the illegal tax.²

RELATION WITH THE NON-MUSLIMS:

In helping the poor the needy, the Firdausi saints made no discrimination on the basis of caste and creed. Many a non-Muslim came to seek their blessings and help.

Once on the occasion of the annual Urs (death anniversary) a Hindu sought blessings of Shaikh Hussain Mu'iz Balkhi. In that assembly Bodh Kotwal and others were also present. The Shaikh told the Bodh Kotwal to persuade the officials of the Diwani not to charge the masrum (fees or taxes) from which the Hindu had been exempted, When the Hindu departed the Shaikh observed," infidelity and faith, orthodoxy and heresy are all technical terms of differentiation for, after all, there is no such thing as an absolute opposition or antagonism, there

1. Muktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, L-113.

2. Ibid- L-92.

are relative terms. All are God's creatures."¹

Regarding the spiritual exercises and asceticism of the Hindus, Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri was liberal² enough to admit that they also could make spiritual progress.³

1. See, Ganj-i-la-Yakhfa, Ms. ff.34-5.

2. On one occasion the Shaikh took his meal with a rich Hindu, while the servants of that gentle man criticised their master for sharing his food with a faqir. See, Monis ul Qulub, Ms. Maj, 55, f.284.

When Saiyid Qutbu'ddin Ghazipuri wanted to know that in Rauzat ul Islam, use of vermilion (Shangarf) by Muslim ladies on their forehead has been condemned as infidelity?

The Shaikh replied that first of all we must investigate the reason behind using vermilion by Hindu ladies on their forehead. Whether it is according to their faith or to enhance their beauty or elegance (husn o jamal)? If they use it because of their faith allows then the use of vermilion on their forehead by Muslim ladies is sinful. Because the Prophet has said that, "Whoever adopts resemblance of any community will be treated to the same community." But on the other hand, the Shaikh has justified it on the following grounds that there are several things which have resemblance in both the community like food, drink, talk, etc. So, according to the Shaikh, use of vermilion by Muslim ladies does not indicate similitude to infidelity. (Monis ul Muridin, Ms. Maj. 12, f.24).

Moreover, when the Shaikh was asked to comment about Muslim employees of Hindu, addressing them as Khudawand. The Shaikh is reported to have replied that 'There was no harm if a servant who got food clothe and money from his master addressing the latter as his Lord or master or Khudawand all terms quite different in meaning from that of Khoda. See, Bahr ul Ma'ani, Ms. f.78.

3. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. ChapXXIII, f. 108,b;
Khwan-i-pur Nifamat, Ms. Maj. 42.f.

He is reported to have admitted that inspite of lack of true faith, the infidels enjoy the quality of love and asceticism.

As far as the soul is concerned, the asceticism or austerities of an infidel or a believer are the same. And in this connection the Shaikh has narrated an interesting story. In West India, the local tribe used to build idol-temples known as Hanudeisa, which they fortified with high walls of stone around the temple. Those widows, who were the lovers of the idol began to live in one of cells that faced the idol. They abandoned everthing out of their love for that idol.¹

Like Amir Khusrau,² the Shaikh has appreciated the deep love and devotion of the Hindus for their idols.

1. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. XXXIII, f.148, a-b.

2. Who has expressed the same feeling in his famous couplet:

ای کہ طعنہ زیت بہ ہندوہری
ہم آموز از وی پرستش گری

(O you who sneer at the idolatry of the Hindu.
Learn also from him how worship is done.)

See, Matla'-ul-Anwar, Amir Khusrau Dehlawi,
Aligarh, P. 88

In a later source, (Managib-ul-Asfiya), the Shaikh is reported to have indulged in same spiritual exercises peculiar to the Hindu Yogis, like standing for a long period in a deep engrossment.

According to the same source the Shaikh had been looked after by a Hindu Zamindar (land lord) of Jagdishpur,¹ who was blessed by the Shaikh.²

It was during his stay for a long period of 30 years in the forest of Bihea and Rajgir Hills, the Shaikh had studied closely the condition of the common people, partook food with them and conversed with them and thus, he carefully

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1. Jadishpur is located 50 miles away to the west of Maner. Its Railway Station is Dumraon, in modern Shahabad Distt. Bihar. L.S.S.C' Malley, Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer, Shahabad, p.170.
 2. Once the landlord of Jagdishpur was passing through the jungle of Bihea, when he found the Shaikh in a state of total absorption in God in his deep engrossment that even ants used to go and come out of his mouth, whereas, the Shaikh was totally unaware of that condition and remained standing with the help of a branch of tree. The landlord took the Shaikh to his house and nourished him with much care. When the Shaikh regained his sense and health he wanted to return Maner but the Zamindar accompanied him in the journey. When the Shaikh, after covering some distance asked the landlord to return back to his home, the latter insisted to go upto Maner. As they reached at Sarudha, the Shaikh told him that, "The boundary line of your territory has already finished and now territory of my descendant begins." The landlord obeyed the Shaikh's command and it is reported that the territory of him extended upto Sarudha within a short period and the rulers of jagdispur and Dumraon, being descendants of that landlord used to commemorate the ceremony Fatiha in memory of the Shaikh on 25th October, even today. See. Managib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. f.144.b.

learnt their local language¹ and himself fully acquainted with the modes of their lives.

Ganj-i-Arshadi, tells us that once in severe winter the Shaikh with very scanty clothes on his body descended from the hills and entered into a large stack or pile of straw which he found at the out skirt of a village. That night a fire broke out in the village which was wrongly ascribed to him by some cowherds who detected him from the leg which was visible and they dragged him out and were about to belabour him when someone identified the wandering fagir. He uttered in Hindi in self defence. Matho Nak Chatto Na Phate; Do Manho Tark channo Na Bhati. (See, my forehead, nose and chest are not broken. Leave me, I do not like to be disturbed.).²

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1. It has been proved through Shaikh's Hindi dialect that he must have learnt the local language of people in the Jungle of Rajgir and Bihea, because common people of interior were not familiar with the official language i.e. Persian.

The Shaikh is reported to have used in various occasion the Hindi dialects.

For instance, in reply to Hafiz Jalal uddin Multani's Hindi proverb

پاٹ بھلی پر سانگے

(The Path is good, but it is narrow)

The Shaikh immediately said:

دیس بھلا پر دور

(The country, or destination, is good but it is far off)

See. Ma'dan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap. XXIII, f. 103. a.

2. Saiyid Hasan Askari, JBSR, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. IV, 1948, p. 103.

It was his liberal policy, spiritual accomplishment and vast knowledge that attracted even Hindus towards the Shaikh who accepted Islam and became his true devotees.¹

1. While the Shaikh was in the forest of Bihea

Shaikh Chawlahi being a cowboy impressed with his spiritual attainment accepted Islam and accompanied the Shaikh throughout his life.

Manaqib-ul-Asfiya; Ganj-i-Arshadi, Pt.4,f.117.

An old Hindu of eighty one years is reported to have attended in the assembly of the Shaikh and accepted Islam, the Shaikh offered a patched garment with wide sleeves and a lungi. He also asked Maulana Abul Qasim and Abul Hasan to take the man to their home and to teach him the basic knowledge of Islam.

See Madan-ul-Ma'ani, Ms. Chap.I. f.8, b.

Similarly, once a yogi arrived at Bihar-Sharif and met some of the disciples of the Shaikh and enquired them, "If they have any Guru (spiritual master)?" When the disciples described qualities and spiritual attainment of the Shaikh, the yogi wanted to see him but hesitated to go before the Shaikh and remarked he looks like 'Kartar rup' (incarnation of God). But with the permission of the Shaikh he was presented before him, who is reported to have embraced Islam.

See. Manaqib-ul-Asfiya, Ms. ff.88-9.

CONCLUSION:

Sufiism, which had originated as a Shi'a spiritual movement in the 8th century A.D. centered round Kufa, culminated in an amalgamation of different ideologies including some Shi'ite tenets, Sunni principles and some Christian, Buddhist and Vedantic elements. Saints like Rabi'a Basri, Ma'aruf-al-Karkhi, Zun Nun Misri, Abu Yazid Bistami evolved mystic terms and Sufis like Mansur al Hallaj and Ibn al-Arabi introduced the controversial doctrines of hulul and Wahdat -ul-Wujud.

The basic principles and the discipline of mystic path were expounded and discussed by Sufis like Sufiyan al Thawri; Abu Abdur Rahman Abdullah B. al Mubarak; Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali bin al Husain al Hakim al Tirmizi; Abu Nasr Abdullah B. Ali B. Muhammad B. Yahya al Serraj; Shaikh Abu Bakr al Kalabadhi; Shaikh Ali Hujweri; Imam al Qushayri and Imam Ghazzali. In spite of sincere attempt, Sufiism continued to be criticised by the orthodox 'Ulama.

Finally, in the 12th century there emerged a number of mystic orders like the Chishti, Qadiri, Suhrawardi, and the Naqshbandi orders.

The Firdausi order, an offshoot of Suhrawardi order was introduced in India by Shaikh Badru'ddin Samargandi but it reached its zenith under Shaikh Sharafu'ddin Yahya al Maneri and was popularized throughout Bihar by his talented disciples and Khalifas like, Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Shaikh Hussain

Mu'izz Balkhi, Zain Badr 'Arabi, Maulana Shah Amun, Qazi Shamsu'ddin of Chausa etc. Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya al Maneri who established his Khanqah at Bihar-Sharif and popularized his Order throughout Bihar. Following the medium path he accepted grants from but did not interfere in the affairs of the rulers. He wrote numerous letters to his disciples in which he has described at length the main principles and the institutions of the Firdausi order.

His views on the origin of Sufiism, and on terms like Shari'at, Trigat, Haqiqat and Ma'rifat, Tauhid (Unity of God), Prayer, Fast, Almsgiving, Pilgrimage to Mecca etc. are unique and thought provoking.

The Shaikh had cordial relation with the two great Tughluq Sultans, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firoz Shah Tughluq. His letters to Muhammad bin Tughluq are very significant in which he has exhorted the Sultan to render justice and not to follow the tyrant rulers like Pharaoh, Shaddad, and Namrud etc.

The Shaikh, although had cordial relations with the rulers, he never hesitated in criticising the oppressive nature of the rulers. One of the important aspects of his relations with the ruler is that he has laid much emphasis on the welfare of the people. He has declared the service of humanity as the basic duty of the rulers.

He himself was very keen to help the poor and the needy and in this respect he did not make any discrimination on the basis of religion, caste or colour. In a number of his letters

he has emphasized this aspect of his discipline. It was this spirit of the Shaikh and his liberal attitude towards the Hindus which made him very popular throughout Bihar. People from different communities visited the Khanqah of the Shaikh, sought his blessings and his intercession for redressing their grievances.

The mission of the Shaikh and the noble traditions of the Firdausi silsilah were popularized by spiritual descendants of the Shaikh. The Firdausi Saints and the Khanqahs continued to inspire and serve the people for several centuries and the Khanqah of the Shaikh at Bihar-Sharif is still a living force in the spiritual life of the people of Bihar.

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